

TWO SIDES OF THE SAME COIN: JEWISH AND PALESTINIAN REFUGEES

HEARING BEFORE THE SUBCOMMITTEE ON THE MIDDLE EAST AND SOUTH ASIA OF THE COMMITTEE ON FOREIGN AFFAIRS HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES ONE HUNDRED TENTH CONGRESS

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TUESDAY, MAY 8, 2007

HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES,
SUBCOMMITTEE ON THE MIDDLE EAST
AND SOUTH ASIA,
COMMITTEE ON FOREIGN AFFAIRS,
Washington, DC.

The subcommittee met, pursuant to notice, at 10:08 a.m. in room 2172, Rayburn House Office Building, Hon. Gary L. Ackerman (chairman of the subcommittee) presiding.

Mr. ACKERMAN. Subcommittee will come to order.

Many painful and complex issues obstruct the path of peace between the Israelis and Palestinians. All of the so-called final status issues are difficult, but some of them are at least well defined in their parameters and even with regard to their possible solutions.

Not so with the refugee question. Its origin, its scope, its terms of reference, and its prospective solutions are all in dispute, making the refugee question the central and perhaps the most difficult of all of the final status issues.

For Palestinians the refugee question more than any other embodies their cause. It carries the weight of their dispossession and collective anger against Israel, their frustration with the inability of their leaders to resolve national crises, and their sense of abandonment by the world despite the reality that millions of Palestinians refugees daily receive services from UNRWA. It connects their statelessness and their ambivalent relationships with the Arab states that, with the noble exception of Jordan, have denied citizenship and equal rights to Palestinian refugees. It is the central repository of both their just claims as well as their most self-serving and selective misuses of international law.

The refugee issue ties the West Bank and Gaza to the Palestinians and surrounding countries and the rest of the world. For Palestinians the refugee question connects 1948 to 1967 to 2007 and an unbroken string of tragedy. And for the Israelis as well, the refugee issue is seminal. It resonates with both the legacy of their own history of the aberrant statelessness and with the Holocaust and the closing of the world's doors at their moment of greatest need.

Likewise, the refugee issue is redolent of the desperate but successful defenses Israel made against Arab efforts to strangle their new-born state.

The refugee issue for Israel is about the expulsion issue of 850,000 Jewish refugees to Middle Eastern countries and the ab-

sorption of 600,000 of them into Israel in the fragile first years of its existence.

In varying degrees and in varying circumstances, between the years of Israel's founding and the 1967 Six-Day War, the Jews of Iran and the Arab world were compelled by circumstance, terror or government edict to forfeit not just their jobs, their entire businesses; not just their personal assets, but the property of entire communities; and most painful of all, not only did they lose their personal dignity and their security, but their entire national identity. For Israelis, these factors, combined with six decades of unremitting war and terrorism, and the implications of demography, make Palestinian demands concerning refugees sound not like calls for justice, but calls for suicide.

There is great bitterness on both sides. Both Jewish and Palestinian refugees carry with them the conviction that their human rights have been trampled, and the world has ignored their displacement, their suffering, and their loss.

Jewish refugees have been successfully absorbed in Israel and elsewhere, and perhaps as a result their claims and misfortune have been largely ignored. The Arab world having denied them more than mere sufferance of their presence, most Palestinian refugees, including many who lack legal identification, still linger in refugee camps that have, in effect, become small cities. Enraged and helpless, they have watched the national movement and institutions that were to have ended their statelessness and resolved their claims stagger, stall, and stand now in real danger of collapse and disintegration.

Even as the claims have lingered and the grievances of the refugees have hardened, time has not stood still. The reality is that an exchange of populations has taken place. The Jews of Iran and the Arab countries are not going back to those lands. And the Palestinian refugees will not be returning to homes in the State of Israel.

President Bush made as much clear in his letter of April 2004 to Israel Prime Minister Sharon where he acknowledged that "it seems clear that an agreed, just, fair, and realistic framework for solutions to the Palestinian refugee issues as part to any final status agreement will be need to be found through the establishment of a Palestinian State and the settling of Palestinian refugees there rather than in Israel."

While including the words "agreed," "just," "fair" and "realistic," President Bush nonetheless took some liberties with Palestinian options. I am not certain that this was wise. Even though I agreed with the President's assessment of what is and what is not possible, I have deep concerns about the wisdom of the United States handicapping the way one party negotiates before the deal-making begins. If you are going to run a high-stakes card game, you have to let the players handle their own cards. In the end, nobody appreciates a rigged game.

Moreover, even if Palestinian negotiators decided tomorrow to depart from the fixed ideology that has developed around the refugee question, even if they were prepared to move forward within the confines described by President Bush, even if they came to the table agreeing with Prime Minister Olmert that no Palestinian ref-

ugee will be allowed into Israel's sovereign territory, there would still be an enormous obstacle to progress. Quite simply, the outcome of any negotiations initiated on this basis wouldn't be acceptable or considered legitimate by the Palestinian people.

Too large an edifice of illusion about the so-called right of return has been built up to be dispensed with overnight.

Year after year, polling among Palestinians shows consistent ambivalence, if not outright unhappiness, with any practical plan to resolve the refugee issue, even when the so-called right of return is an incorporated element.

Unfortunately, it appears that to a majority of Palestinians, refugeehood has become an indelible component of their identity, and that an imaginary world with a right of return has become more precious than actual citizenship in Palestine. The reality gap is a problem that needs to be addressed; however, attempting to force Palestinians to give up their dreams in a vacuum would not only be ineffectual, but counterproductive.

You can't coerce someone in love out of it, but they can be tempted by another offer, especially one that is more attractive and available. Developing this offer and finding the means in the international community to address the outstanding material claims of both groups of refugees is where our task might begin.

I believe that Israel's Foreign Minister recently sketched out this more attractive and available dream. She said "two states, two homelands, for two peoples—Israel, homeland for the Jewish people wherever they may be. And Palestine, the homeland, the national answer for the Palestinian people, wherever they may be, including the refugees. . . . This vision is not pro-Israeli or pro-Palestinian. It is pro-peace."

Selling this alternative dream will not be easy. There is a great deal of hostility and mistrust to overcome, but working in our favor is the fact that there is no better offer coming anytime soon or ever.

[The prepared statement of Mr. Ackerman follows:]

PREPARED STATEMENT OF THE HONORABLE GARY L. ACKERMAN, A REPRESENTATIVE IN CONGRESS FROM THE STATE OF NEW YORK, AND CHAIRMAN, SUBCOMMITTEE ON THE MIDDLE EAST AND SOUTH ASIA

Many painful and complex issues obstruct the path of peace between Israelis and Palestinians. All of the so-called "final status issues" are difficult, but some of them are at least well-defined in their parameters and even with regard to their possible solution.

Not so with the refugee question. Its origin, its scope, its terms of reference and its prospective solutions are all in dispute, making the refugee question the central and, perhaps, the most difficult of the final status issues.

For Palestinians, the refugee question, more than any other, embodies their cause. It carries the weight of their dispossession and collective anger against Israel; their frustration with the inability of their leaders to resolve their national crisis; and their sense of abandonment by the world, despite the reality that millions of Palestinian refugees daily receive services from UNRWA. It connects their statelessness and their ambivalent relationships with the Arab states that—with the noble exception of Jordan—have denied citizenship and equal rights to Palestinian refugees. It is the central repository for both their just claims as well as their most self-serving and selective misuses of international law. The refugee issue ties the West Bank and Gaza to the Palestinians in surrounding countries and the rest of the world. For Palestinians, the refugee question connects 1948 to 1967 to 2007 in an unbroken string of tragedy.

And for Israelis as well, the refugee issue is seminal. It resonates with both the legacy of their own history of diaspora and statelessness, and with the Holocaust

and the closing of the world's doors in their moment of greatest need. Likewise, the refugee issue is redolent of the desperate but successful defense Israel made against Arab efforts to strangle their newborn state. The refugee issue for Israel is also about the expulsion of as many as 850,000 Jewish refugees from the Middle East and the absorption of 600,000 of them into Israel in the fragile first years of its existence. In varying degrees, and in varying circumstances, between the years of Israel's founding and the 1967 Six-Day War, the Jews of Iran and the Arab world were compelled by circumstance, terror or government edict to forfeit not just their jobs, but entire businesses; not just their personal assets, but the property of entire communities; and most painful of all, not only did they lose their personal dignity and security, but their entire national identity. For Israelis, these factors, combined with six decades of unremitting war and terrorism, and the implications of demography, make Palestinian demands concerning refugees sound not like calls for justice, but calls for suicide.

There is great bitterness on both sides. Both Jewish and Palestinian refugees carry with them the conviction that their human rights have been trampled and that the world has ignored their displacement, suffering and loss. Jewish refugees have been successfully absorbed in Israel and elsewhere and, perhaps, as a result, their claims and misfortune have been largely ignored. The Arab world having denied them more than mere sufferance of their presence, most Palestinian refugees—including many who lack even legal identification—still linger in refugee camps that have in fact become small cities. Enraged and helpless, they have watched the national movement and institutions that were to have ended their statelessness, and resolved their claims, stagger, stall and stand now in real danger of collapse or disintegration.

Even as the claims have lingered and the grievances of the refugees have hardened, time has not stood still. The reality is that an exchange of populations has taken place; that the Jews of Iran and the Arab countries are not going back to those lands; and that the Palestinian refugees will not be returning to homes in the State of Israel.

President Bush made as much clear in his letter of April 2004 to Israeli Prime Minister Sharon, wherein he acknowledged that "It seems clear that an agreed, just, fair and realistic framework for a solution to the Palestinian refugee issue as part of any final status agreement will need to be found through the establishment of a Palestinian state, and the settling of Palestinian refugees there, rather than in Israel."

While including the words "agreed, just, fair, and realistic," President Bush nonetheless took some liberties with Palestinian options. I'm not certain this was wise. Even though I agree with the President's assessment of what is, and what is not possible, I have deep concerns about the wisdom of the United States handicapping one party to a negotiation before the deal-making begins. If you're going to run a high-stakes card game, you have to let the players handle their own cards. In the end, no one appreciates a rigged game.

Moreover, even if Palestinian negotiators decided tomorrow to depart from the fixed ideology that has developed around the refugee question; even if they were prepared to move forward within the confines described by President Bush; even if they came to the table agreeing with Prime Minister Olmert, that no Palestinian refugees will be allowed into Israel's sovereign territory; there would still be an enormous obstacle to progress. Quite simply, the outcome of any negotiations initiated on this basis wouldn't be acceptable or considered legitimate by the Palestinian people. Too large an edifice of illusion about the so-called "right of return" has been built up to be dispensed with overnight.

Year after year, polling among Palestinians shows consistent ambivalence, if not outright unhappiness with any practical plan to resolve the refugee issue—even when the so-called "right of return" is an incorporated element. Unfortunately, it appears that for a majority of Palestinians, "refugee-hood" has become an indelible component of their identity, and that an imaginary world with a "right of return" has become more precious than actual citizenship in Palestine. This reality—gap is a problem that needs to be addressed.

However, attempting to force Palestinians to give up their dreams in a vacuum would not only be ineffectual, but counterproductive. You can't coerce someone in love out of it. But they can be tempted by another offer. Especially one that is more attractive and available. Developing this offer, and finding the means in the international community to address the outstanding material claims of both groups of refugees, is where our task might begin.

I believe that Israel's foreign minister, recently sketched out this more attractive and available dream: "Two States, two homelands, for two peoples—Israel, homeland for the Jewish people wherever they may be. And Palestine, the homeland, the

national answer for the Palestinian people, wherever they may be, including the refugees. . . . This vision is not pro-Israeli or pro-Palestinian. It is pro-peace.”

Selling this alternative dream will not be easy. There is a great deal of hostility and mistrust to overcome. But working in our favor is the fact that there is no better offer coming any time soon. Or ever.

Mr. ACKERMAN. And with that, I turn to our distinguished ranking member of the subcommittee Mr. Pence.

Mr. PENCE. Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Thanks for calling this hearing, and I wish to welcome our distinguished witnesses.

This is a complex and challenging set of issues. One element is the number of Palestinian refugees is hotly disputed, ranging somewhere between 520,000 and 900,000.

Indeed, stating the matter as the two sides of the same coin is itself controversial.

I would argue that the historical record is clear on at least one matter: Jewish refugees in Arab countries often face pogroms, execution, bombings, tortures, forced exile and nearly universally confiscation of property, often solely for the alleged crime of Zionism if not merely existing. There is really no comparison with that to what the Palestinian refugees have faced.

While I have compassion for the plight of the Palestinian people, their situation rests squarely with their leadership, I would offer, and to a lesser extent with the leaders of the Arab world. Palestinian leadership's intransigence and unwillingness to keep its many commitments have left its people in hostility with their Jewish neighbors.

Further, the utter pittance that Arab states have contributed to the United Nations Relief and Works Agency for Palestinian refugees in the Near East would be laughable, frankly, if it weren't so tragic. Most Arab states have treated the Palestinians as pawns, denying them any number of rights. Palestinians have been so poorly served by their leaders and by their ostensible allies, so an entire people have suffered for more than half a century now.

Mr. Chairman, in addition to the larger refugee question, I am gravely concerned about the protection of Palestinian and Christian communities, notably in Bethlehem, Nazareth and Jerusalem. Palestinian Christians comprise 2 percent of the population, down from 8–10 percent of just a few decades ago.

I am troubled with this quasi-ethnic scouring that seems to be going on. According to the 2006 Religious Freedom Report from our Department of State, the Palestinian Authority failed to halt several cases of seizures of Christian-owned land in the Bethlehem area by criminal gangs, and PA security forces and judicial officials purportedly colluded with members of these gangs to seize land from Christians in recent years.

One might conclude that the modern militant Islam in any number of manifestations is a threat to any multi confessional society. Many of the churches in communities that I speak of trace their lineage back literally to the time of Christ 2000 years ago, yet today they are not a favored group in the least by the Hamas-led government. This is, from the perspective of this American Christian—this is outrageous and tragic.

Mr. Chairman, complicated questions about the right of return, the final status of various groups and the disposal of perhaps \$1 billion of Jewish property confiscated, these matters are complex

and will probably be negotiated for the next century. But a simple, straightforward step to alleviating misery is within the grasp of the Palestinian leadership; namely recognizing Israel's right to exist and renouncing violence is all that stands in the way of a two-state solution and most likely a massive flow of aid into the Palestinian territory. Certainly its leaders can do that, if nothing else, to help their own people.

Thank you for calling this hearing, and I am anxious to hear the testimony and the dialogue that will follow.

Mr. ACKERMAN. Ms. Jackson Lee.

Ms. JACKSON LEE. Good morning to the witnesses, and I thank the chairman and the ranking member for convening this hearing for what I consider to be an enormously important issue, and that is the question of refugees.

I think the question of a resolve of the Middle East crisis, and I still define it as such, really calls upon the United States to be actively engaged, and certainly the United States Congress. These hearings are crucial to our engagement. It makes a statement of our concern, and this is a balanced perspective to acknowledge the Palestinian refugees.

It comes to mind of a particular family that I worked with here in the United States that was attempting to secure status. They were Palestinians, and, in essence, they have been able to stay here because they were classified as having no country. And, of course, in deportation, which we worked very hard to avoid, they were deported to Jordan where we know that there are large, large numbers; millions are Palestinian refugees.

It speaks volumes for establishing a settlement, whether it is a two-state settlement that has been represented in that area to give country and to assure the security and safety of Israel and the security and safety of Palestine, and to ensure that people who want to go home can go home.

It is important to note as well and why this hearing is, from the perspective of being balanced, should include the long history of Israeli or Jewish refugees coming from Europe, having to move from place to place on the basis of their ethnicity and their religion.

And so I hope as we proceed not only are we pursuing this hearing, but we will make a statement that this Congress, this committee, is engaged, and that we can have a resolution. We can have peace. We can secure the lives and the safety of refugees who simply want to be able to go home to a place they can call home. That is my dream, and that is what I hope will be the message of this Congress, this committee, and this Nation.

And I hope we will never go back to the philosophy of let them handle it themselves. If you have a friend, should you not be engaged with that friend? We have friends. And we have friends in the Middle East, and we having standing relationships. Should we not be engaged to secure the peace and safety of people who are only seeking the quality of life that so many of us have in the United States?

And I yield back.

[The prepared statement of Ms. Jackson Lee follows:]

PREPARED STATEMENT OF THE HONORABLE SHEILA JACKSON LEE, A REPRESENTATIVE
IN CONGRESS FROM THE STATE OF TEXAS

Thank you, Mr. Chairman, for convening this important hearing. Unfortunately, decades of attempts to achieve peace in the Middle East have yet to be successful, and the ongoing strife in Israel and the Palestinian territories requires our ongoing attention and concern. May I also thank the Ranking Member, and welcome our two witnesses, Dr. Howard M. Sachar, Professor Emeritus of History and International Affairs at the George Washington University, and Dr. Shibley Telhami, Anwar Sadat Professor for Peace and Development at the University of Maryland.

The issue of refugees continues to haunt efforts to bring peace to troubled regions of the Middle East. It is at the center of most Palestinian-Israeli negotiations, and remains a sensitive and emotional issue for millions around the world. With hundreds of thousands of Palestinians displaced by the 1948 war and subsequent conflicts, and significant Jewish populations escaping an uneasy existence and escalating persecution in Arab countries, any successful peace deal will have to address the issue of refugees. Having traveled extensively in the region, and I have witnessed first-hand the promise of the Holy Land, as well as the destitution of long-term strife, and I remain committed to working toward peace in the Middle East.

By any measure, the Palestinian refugee situation is truly tragic. Dating from the 1948 Arab-Israeli war, when hundreds of thousands of Palestinian Arabs fled or were forced from their homes, it has been labeled by the United Nations the most protracted refugee situation of our day. Most international assistance to Palestinian refugees falls under the UN Relief and Works Agency in the Near East (UNRWA). This agency, originally intended to be only a short-term solution, has repeatedly seen its mandate extended, most recently to June 2008.

There is a serious need for the UN and other members of the international community to turn their attention to a long term solution. Refugee camps are crucial, but they are not the ultimate answer. They may be able to provide some services to those displaced from their homes, but they will never become a new home. As subsequent generations are born and raised in these camps, new fears, including that the camps are being used as military training grounds or bases for terrorist activities, arise.

Additionally, a solution to the Palestinian refugee crisis requires the active engagement and support of Israel's Arab neighbors. Long opposed to resettlement or naturalization for a variety of reasons, these states, including Egypt, Lebanon, Syria, and Iraq, have feared the political and economic implications of assimilation. Providing secure residency status, as well as the ability to own property, to work freely, and to access government services, would assist the refugees escape from humanitarian catastrophe and begin rebuilding a life. Palestinian refugees have become a political tool; we must remember that these are human beings who have been condemned to a life of suffering and insecurity.

As the title of this hearing suggests, this is not simply a matter of displaced Palestinians. All Arab countries, as well as Iran, have been the home of centuries-old Jewish communities. In the years since the establishment of the State of Israel, however, these communities have increasingly come under threat, with Jewish property confiscated and Jews murdered in riots. With the gradual easing of emigration restrictions, at the urging of the international community, Jewish residents of these states have increasingly chosen to emigrate to Israel or elsewhere.

Like the Palestinian refugees who fled warfare in Israel, Jews escaping persecution in Arab countries often had to leave their property behind. Many Jewish refugees assert a right to redress, citing the lack of compensation for these assets. While estimates of the total value of these claims vary widely, they appear to be in the billions of dollars. Perhaps more important than achieving redress for these claims, according to some, is the need to have these Jews fleeing Arab countries recognized as refugees. There is a clear parallel to be drawn between the claims of both groups fleeing violence and persecution.

While a great deal of international attention has been paid to the problem of Palestinian refugees, little has been focused on their Jewish counterparts. Hundreds of United Nations resolutions address the former, while none deal specifically with the latter. I commend the Chairman of this committee for convening today's hearing under a title which specifically seeks to highlight the similarities between these two situations.

I look forward to the testimony of our two distinguished witnesses, which I hope will shed additional light on this tragic situation. Thank you, Mr. Chairman, and I yield back the balance of my time.

Mr. ACKERMAN. Thank you very much.

Mr. Chabot.

Mr. CHABOT. Thank you very much. I thank you for holding this hearing. I don't want to repeat in my brief statement here what the other members have said, so I will touch on a couple of different points.

Let me follow up on what the ranking member just mentioned before about some of the Arab states and their, shall we say, inadequate financial support for the Palestinian refugees.

One thing that oftentimes doesn't get mentioned, I think, in that part of the world or even in our press here is the amount of United States support that is going toward Palestinian refugees. My understanding is it has been hundreds of millions of dollars, and, in fact, in this upcoming year it is projected to be about 130 million of United States tax dollars going to Palestinian refugees. And I think that is one of those things that ought to get, I think, mentioned in that area of the world where the United States is often, oftentimes, held up as the great Satan or some—a divisive or some—causing problems in the region as opposed to trying to be of help, and I think that is something that should be out there.

I am reminded of a political cartoon I saw some years ago in the *Washington Times*, and it showed somebody who could have been a Palestinian refugee, it is hard to say, it is clearly an Arab individual in the cartoon, who had a grain of—a sack of grain that was USAID, had an American flag on there, and the caption under it, as he is looking at it, is: "Those Americans. They think of everything. Food and a flag to burn." and unfortunately, far too often that is sort of the way the United States is looked at in that part of the world.

And I also think we should again just not remember—not forget that if you look at the most recent U.S. military actions around the world, for the most part they have been either in defense trying to save lives of Muslims. If you look at Somalia, if you look at Kosovo, if you look at Bosnia-Herzegovina, if you look at Kuwait, if you look at Afghanistan, even Iraq, although clearly there are lives being lost on both sides, in essence what we are attempting to do is to provide a better life for people in that region and also make sure that it doesn't become a terrorist haven that is a threat not only to the region, but also to the United States.

So a couple of other very brief points. Some concerns that I think many of us continue to have is the refugee camps, the instances where there is training going on there either for military or for terrorist activity continues to—we need to continue to monitor that. And then finally textbooks and educational materials that have significant amount of anti-Semitic either captions or caricatures, cartoons, et cetera, although it has been talked about and referred to, it still exists. To the extent we are able to eliminate that, we ought to attempt to do that.

I yield back, Mr. Chairman.

Mr. ACKERMAN. Mr. Scott.

Mr. SCOTT. Thank you very much, Mr. Chairman.

I just want to commend you for this hearing. I think that the whole issue of Jewish and Palestinian refugees is extraordinarily important. It is very timely. The Middle East is engaged in very, very complex issues. I look forward to this hearing.

Thank you very much for having it.

Mr. ACKERMAN. Thank you.

Mr. Inglis.

Mr. INGLIS. Thank you, Mr. Chairman, for convening the hearing, and I look forward to hearing from the witnesses.

Mr. ACKERMAN. And now we shall hear from our distinguished witnesses.

Dr. Howard M. Sachar is one of America's preeminent scholars of modern history of the Middle East. Based in Washington, DC, where he is a professor emeritus at the George Washington University, Dr. Sachar has been a lecturer on Middle Eastern affairs in the United States Foreign Service Institute, a visiting summer professor at Hebrew University and Tel Aviv University, and a guest lecturer at other universities in the United States, Europe, South Africa and Egypt. Professor Sachar has contributed to many scholarly journals, written 15 books, and is also the editor-in-chief of the 39-volume series, *The Rise of Israel: A Documentary History*.

Dr. Shibley Telhami is the Anwar Sadat Professor for Peace and Development at the University of Maryland, College Park, and a nonresident senior fellow at the Saban Center at the Brookings Institute. Professor Telhami has served as advisor to the U.S. mission to the U.N., as advisor to the former chairman of the Foreign Affairs Committee Lee Hamilton, and as a member of the U.S. delegation of the trilateral U.S.-Israeli-Palestinian Anti-Incitement Committee which was mandated by the Wye River agreements.

Dr. Telhami served on the U.S. Advisory Group on Public Diplomacy for the Arab and Muslim World, which was appointed by the Department of State at the request of Congress. And he co-drafted the reports of their findings: *Changing Minds, Winning Peace*.

Welcome to both of you, and first we will hear from Dr. Sachar.

**STATEMENT OF HOWARD M. SACHAR, PH.D., PROFESSOR
EMERITUS OF HISTORY AND INTERNATIONAL AFFAIRS, THE
GEORGE WASHINGTON UNIVERSITY**

Mr. SACHAR. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

I, too, would like to welcome my distinguished colleague Professor Telhami, whom I remember as the charismatic teacher of my daughter at the Swarthmore College. She never had a better course on the Middle East.

The few minutes that are at my disposal really do not leave me enough time for more than a summary of a summary. For example, the statistics tell a rather mordant story. In 1948, there were, according to U.N. statistics, 856,000 Jews living in the Middle East among Arab countries; and in North Africa among Berber or Muslim countries. Today the total in all countries, Middle Eastern and Northern African, are 7,800 Jews. And the circumstances—hardly the details of their exodus—are sharply different.

I am going to start with the latter, the North African littoral, the so-called Maghreb. And if there is no time, perhaps in the question and discussion period, we may talk about the Jews of the Arab countries.

Libya had about 35,000 indigenous Jews, that is to say Jews who traced their antecedents to antiquity, and these people enjoyed reasonable security under Berber sultans, under Ottoman rule, and

most recently under Italian rule. And that is even including under Mussolini's rule, who protected them in peace and war.

But after World War II, the advent of Berber nationalism provoked an eruption of anti-Jewish riots causing several hundred Jewish casualties. This violence was intensified during the Palestine war, and as a result, Jewish and Zionist philanthropies arranged for direct sailings and repatriation from Benghazi to Haifa, although about half of the Libyan Jews later settled in Italy. By 1951, three-quarters of them were gone. Today not more than a dozen remain.

But in French North Africa lived the bulk of the half-million Jews of this North African littoral. In 1948, more than three-fifths of them lived in Morocco and Tunisia; about 285,000 in Morocco, and 105,000 in Tunisia. Most of them were indigenous Jews, descendants of converted Berbers. But there was a substantial minority of Sephardic Jews among them, especially in Tunisia; that is to say fugitives, 16th century fugitives from Spain. They were poor. They were desperately poor, and until modern times they lived as devious, that is to say, second-class citizens among the Muslim majority. They lived a degraded existence in wretched ghetto quarantines and primarily the bigger cities.

In Morocco, the establishment of the French protectorate in 1912 brought physical security and even some marginal economic improvement. Still, the circumstances of their existence during World War II when Tunisia devolved and Morocco devolved into essentially Vichy administration, that was a very difficult period for them, but at least because of the Italian participation in the access control commission, their lives were spared. But they entered the postwar period pauperized and wards of the Joint Distribution Committee, which was the essential and largest international Jewish philanthropy.

And then with the Palestine war of 1948, they were subjected to pogroms, massacres, violence, pillage, and the first wave of immigration to Israel took place essentially between 1949 and 1954. Some 100,000 of the poorest and most insular Jews departed for their ancestral Holy Land.

The second wave of immigration was coterminous with the rise of Morocco to independence between 1954 and 1956. And for that independence, I must note marginally that they had to thank a Jewish premier, Pierre Mendes-France.

The nationalists in Morocco meant very well, and they assured the remaining Jews in their country full security and equality. And a lot of younger Jews sympathized with their independence movement. Their government, by and large, kept their word to the Jewish minority. One Jew was included in the cabinet of independent Morocco. Others participated in the other echelons of government, and specifically in the profession of journalism. In the Six-Day War, King Hassan of Morocco was emphatic in his protection of the Jewish minority.

But perhaps inevitably most Jews feared the loss of the French presence and the unpredictable consequences of an unstable and still impoverished Muslim majority, and most quietly left for Israel or France, and they were not restricted in their departure. Indeed,

in subsequent years, King Hassan has ensured correct, if unofficial, relations even with Israel until his death.

Whether in Israel or in France, this Jewish residue is problematically questioned as or listed as refugees. I would leave the issue to perhaps international lawyers, but I don't think that Israel has a substantial grievance against Morocco.

In Tunisia, coming under French rule in the 1880s, 70 percent of this little country's 105,000 Jews lived in the capital of Tunis. By the 20th century, this modest community had achieved tolerable lower middle-class status as small businessmen and even functionaries in the French administration which assured them full security and civil equality with the nation's Berber majority.

Again, the Vichy interregnum of World War II stripped Jews of many of their economic freedoms and purged them from the administration. Between 1948 and 1953, some 18,000 of the poorest and most insular Jewish citizens of Morocco left for Israel, and the rise of Israel evoked no meaningful reactions among Tunisian Muslims, but the country's independence did.

Again, President Habib Bourguiba and his nationalist Neo-Destour leadership gave every assurance of goodwill. They took Jews into the party caucuses and even into the government. But the new government shift to a tautism, state socialism and key elements of the economy all but liquidated the traditional sectors of the Jewish commerce, and accordingly the Jews departed with increasing speed and under increasing duress with forbidden transfers of capital abroad, distress sales of their homes and businesses, and economically they were in a state of functional impoverishment. Today in Tunisia less than 1,000 Jews remain.

And lastly, in Algeria, with its substantial minority mixture of Jews, many of them from Sephardic ancestors, they have lived in that country since the 16th century. France was not only their protector when the France—when the French took over Algeria in 19th century, they were the patrie. They were the protector and the homeland of the Jews.

The Jews numbered about 135,000 on the eve of World War II, but if they represented only 1.4 percent of Algeria's inhabitants, they were 14 percent of the country's 950,000 European settlers. And even as the Europeans, since the beginning of the France's occupation in 1830, were French citizens, so the Jews were citizens of France from 1869 onward.

Unlike their kinsmen in Morocco and Tunisia, they shared the rights of French nationality in every particular. With others of Algeria's Europeans, they voted in French elections. They were solid in their middle-class status. Several thousand even held positions in the Franco-Algerian civil service and in the country's professions.

If they suffered social isolation, it was at the hands of the colons of the Europeans. Europeans of Algeria were as prototypically xenophobic as any irredentist minority in Europe. They were obliged to be more Catholic than the Pope, and they were the most vitriolic anti-Semites during the Dreyfus Affair or during Leon Blum's Popular Front government in the 1930s, and certainly during the Vichy administration of World War II.

It was indicative of the colons' right-wing orientation that in 1942 virtually the only members of Algeria's European population to play an active role in Operation Torch, the American landings of—in North Africa, were the Jewish underground. And even afterward, a year and a half passed before the French restored Jewish political rights in Algeria.

But the period of restored Jewish security endured barely a decade. By the mid-1950s Berber restovists had burgeoned into full-scale insurrection. Jewish reaction to the ensuing slaughter and counter slaughter of French and Algerians was confused. Many Jews sympathized with the FLM, the nationalist movement of the Berber population, and that movement, by the way, promised the Jews fuel security and equality in an independent Algerian State.

On the other hand, the insurgency was fueled and equipped by Nasser's Egypt, and the prospect of being governed by a regime beholden to one of Israel's most implacable enemies was unsettling.

Moreover, in 1960, the Berber's xenophobia unexpectedly burst out against the Jews. There were widespread anti-Jewish riots. They culminated in the pillaging of the Great Synagogue of Algeria, and to the Jewish majority, this was a prefiguration of their possible life in a Muslim ocean. They would not chance it. Nor would Algeria's European community at large risk its future to a Berber government, especially when President de Gaulle in 1962 signaled his willingness to countenance full Algerian independence and pull the French Army out of Algeria. And indeed by early 1963, the totality of European settlers, 950,000 of them, embarked on a vast collective exodus to France, leaving behind their homes, farms, estates, businesses, and public institutions.

The 135,000 Jews of Algeria, with the exception of a tiny minority of 5,000, joined this departure to France, which had promised them full social welfare benefits, housing, education, employment. And they reached the decision thus to share in the collective European transmigration, and they settled in France.

Now, gentlemen and ladies, by contrast, the fate of the 315,000 Jews in the Arab countries of the Middle East, of Yemen, Iraq, Aden, Syria, Egypt, well, that evinces none of the political or economic uncertainties characteristic of the North African littoral. On the contrary, that fate was as decisive and unambiguous as a guillotine. Without exception, the Jewish populations of these lands were politically quarantined, economically decimated and eventually driven en masse from their family homes with the clothing on their backs and virtually nothing else.

This is a phenomenon well known, I think, to members of the committee. I am not going to dwell on it until perhaps the question period, and I—I will leave the testimony to my colleague.

Mr. ACKERMAN. Thank you very much.

[The prepared statement of Mr. Sachar follows:]

PREPARED STATEMENT OF HOWARD M. SACHAR, PH.D., PROFESSOR EMERITUS OF
HISTORY AND INTERNATIONAL AFFAIRS, THE GEORGE WASHINGTON UNIVERSITY

THE CIRCUMSTANCES OF THE TWENTIETH-CENTURY JEWISH EXODUS FROM ISLAMIC
LANDS

YEMEN

The exodus of Jews from Islamic Lands, as the exodus of Arabs from Palestine, was a mixture of anomie, intimidation, and desperation. This can be gauged most graphically in the "career" of the ancient Jewish community of the Imamate of Yemen, an obscure little principality tucked into the southwestern corner of the Arabian peninsula. Descended from refugees and exiles of the Judea of biblical antiquity, the Jews community of Yemen were among the first casualties of the Islamic conquest of the Middle East. From the eighth century on, they were transformed into a *dhimmi* people—a barely tolerated, second-class minority. Denied the right to own land, they were obliged to pay special taxes, to live in ghetto quarters in Tsan'a and other Yemeni towns, and restricted to marginal livelihoods as petty artisans.

For these intensely religious and ethnocentric Yemenites—the 50,000 Jews of Yemen—the birth of Israel in 1948 was both a catastrophe and an opportunity for messianic redemption. Indeed, several thousand of them had managed to migrate to their idealized Holy Land even earlier, in the early 20th century. But by 1949, the impulsion to leave for Israel was animated by sheer survival. Enraged by the defeat of Arab armies in the Palestine war, Yemeni mobs began pouring through Jewish neighborhoods, pillaging and burning. Hereupon, the Imam of Yemen decided to place no obstacles in the way of the Jews' departure for Israel—so long as they left all of their workshops, homes, and chattels to the government. With their packsacks and the clothes on their back, they literally walked the more than 100 miles from Yemen to the British Crown colony of Aden, arriving three weeks later as living skeletons. From Aden, nursed back to health by medical teams supplied by Jewish philanthropies, 48,000 of these survivors were later flown by chartered planes to Israel. Accordingly, the Yemenites became the one Jewish community in the world that was transported in its entirety to Israel. Penniless they left, and penniless they arrived.

IRAQ

If there existed a Middle Eastern Jewish population even older than that of the Yemenites, it was the Jews of Iraq. These latter traced back to the Israelites of ancient Babylon, and thereby comprised the oldest Jewish population on earth. No Jewry in the Middle East, not even the Yemenites, was ever more thoroughly arabized. They blended almost completely into the ethnographic landscape. As *dhimmi*, to be sure, they too were subjected over the centuries to second-class status and ghettoization. Yet, by 1914, numbering some 115,000, Iraqi Jewry had become Ottoman citizens in the fullest sense of the word, spared the need any longer to pay *dhimmi* taxes or to live in *dhimmi* neighborhoods. They were allowed to send delegates to the Ottoman parliament in Constantinople, to serve in the law courts and municipal councils.

Moreover, if they experienced any lingering insecurities, these were dissipated almost completely upon establishment of the British quasi-mandate in 1920. In ensuing years, four Jews sat in the Iraqi parliament, and one served as minister of finance. Throughout the 1920s and 1930s, Jewish children attended government schools and universities, and went on to be leading businessmen and doctors and lawyers in Iraqi public life. By 1949, numbering approximately 140,000, Iraqi Jews had achieved an economic and educational distinction unequaled in the Moslem world, except for Egypt.

Prefigurations of a recurrent vulnerability appeared after the outbreak of World War II. With Britain on the defensive in the Middle East, a pro-Nazi military cabal briefly assumed control of the Iraqi government in May 1941, and Arab rioters launched forays into Jewish commercial and residential quarters, killing over 200 Jews before the arrival of a small British expeditionary could restore order. In the early postwar years, however, demonstrations against Zionism mounted in intensity, and with them anti-Jewish propaganda. By the spring of 1948, the termination of the British mandate and the withdrawal of British garrisons posed an acute threat to the Jewish minority. All the more so when the Palestine War began in May 1948. Zionism was proclaimed a capital offense, and hundreds of Jews were arrested, tried, and sentenced to imprisonment on that charge.

By September 1949, the worst of the violence abated. Yet the economic ordeal was just beginning for the Jews. Most of their import-export and banking licenses were revoked. Accordingly, in despair of their future in Iraq, several thousand younger Jews arranged to be smuggled across the border to Iran, and from there to Israel. But even the most respected Jewish businessmen now recognized their group vulnerability, and awaited only a safer opportunity to clear out. That chance materialized in March 1950. Under a secret deal between the Iraqi prime minister's office and representatives of the Jewish Agency, the government announced that Jews wishing to emigrate to "occupied Palestine" were permitted to do so, and on charter aircraft leased by the Jewish Agency. It was the government's condition, however, that the Jews renounce their Iraqi citizenship and forthwith dispose of their homes, businesses, and chattels, which presumably would be made available to local Arabs. Immediately, thousands of Jewish householders accepted these conditions and lined up at makeshift registration offices. (They were joined by some 14,000 backward Jews from the mountainous Kurdish territories.)

By the end of 1950, therefore, fully 65,000 Jews had left Iraq for Israel. Selling off their homes, shops, and offices at distress prices, they departed with only the smallest residue of their savings. Yet some 55,000 or 60,000 Jews decided to wait, in the hope that market conditions would improve. But early in 1951, with obvious government concurrence, acts of violence against Jews broke out again, including synagogue bombings and mob attack attacks on Jewish neighborhoods. When the remaining Jewish inhabitants hurried to sell out for whatever they could get, they soon discovered that they had waited too long. In March of that year, all Jewish assets were frozen, emigrating Jews afterward were permitted to take with them only forty pounds each. By June 1951, the deadline for legal emigration, some 110,000 Jews had relinquished their citizenship and departed. Another 13,000 Jews had earlier fled illegally, via Iran. As a result, Jewish assets valued at the equivalent of \$200 million were transferred to the government, which then proceeded to auction them off for hard cash.

By 1952, only 6,000 Jews remained in the country. By 1967, in the wake of the Arab-Israeli Six-Day, their numbers totaled 3,000. In 1971, as a consequence of intense pressure by Western governments, this final remnant was allowed to leave Iraq, although without money or property of any kind.

SYRIA AND LEBANON

As late as 1947, some 26,000 Jews were living in Syria, a population divided almost equally between Damascus and Aleppo. Despite their intense communal ethnocentrism, their legal and political circumstances were not uncomfortable. Earlier, under the listless Ottoman administration, they had endured no serious political disabilities, and had even achieved a certain eminence in commerce. Under the French mandate, they shared in the dramatic upsurge of the Levant's economy, especially the 5,000 Jews of Beirut, Lebanon—a separate mandate after 1925—who lived at the gateway to Mediterranean trade. Moreover, these latter continued to enjoy political security well after the French departure and the establishment of Lebanese independence in 1946—and even following the birth of Israel two years after that.

Indeed, Jews remained in the Lebanese civil service. As late as 1962, several Jews participated in the Lebanese delegation to the United Jews. Offering refuge to the Jews of Syria after the Palestine War of 1948, Lebanon was the one Arab state in which Jewish numbers actually increased following Israeli independence, from 5,700 (in the 1944 census) to 9,000 in 1949. Afterward, however, emigration to Israel and to other nations swiftly depleted this population, to less than 200 by 1984. Although they suffered losses in the sale of their property, their departure was not significantly hindered, nor were their funds sequestered. Lebanese Jewry cannot properly be described as a refugee community.

But Syrian Jewry was an altogether different story. During the last years of the French mandate, there were occasional violent demonstrations against the "supporters of Zionism." In 1945, the director of the Alliance school in Damascus was murdered. Following the UN Palestine Partition Resolution of November 1947, a series of anti-Jewish outbursts in Aleppo were climaxed by the sacking of the Bahsita—Jewish—quarter. And in the aftermath of the Palestine War, Jewish circumstances deteriorated dramatically. Jewish identification papers were stamped with the word *Musawi* (Mosaic). Most of the Jews' communal schools were closed. To inhibit illegal Jewish departure, and the possible augmentation of Israel's military manpower, the government in 1948 prohibited the sale of Jewish property, and five years later froze Jewish bank accounts. Most chilling of all, Jews were subject to periodic arrest, interrogation, and torture for suspected Zionist activities; or were

obliged to visit their district police stations on a daily basis as an earnest of their good behavior, whenever their children or other close relatives succeeded in escaping over the Syrian border.

In 1957, the vise tightened. "Encouraged" to remain within their home cities, Jews no longer were issued driving licenses, and their business licenses were subjected to quixotic cancellations, often without advance notice. Moreover, the inauguration of a radical Ba'athist government in 1962 launched a new era of political tension, and this in a country already notorious for political instability. The government's essential purpose thenceforth was to militarize Syrian public life and to intensify public hostility toward the "imperialist" West and Israel. One of the regime's ensuing mutations compensated for its political weakness by openly championing the one cause that was universally popular, a revanchist war against Israel.

Accordingly, it was the Six-Day War that ended any lingering Jewish hopes for security. In the aftermath of Syria's defeat, under the administration of President Nureddin al-Atassi, Jewish population suffered an upsurge of arbitrary arrests, kidnappings, and permanent disappearances. No Jew henceforth was allowed to travel more than three miles from his home. By 1971 and 1972, out of sheer despair, the remaining Jewish men—and some women—began to run the grave risks of flight again. With the endless distribution of bribes, some of these people managed to develop new border contacts and exit routes through Turkey, occasionally even through Lebanon. In the earlier years, between 1948 and 1961, approximately 15,000 Jews had succeeded in fleeing the country. Afterward, the rate had slowed. But in the nightmare period between 1963 and 1967, another 6,000 found ways to cross the frontier. By the end of the 1970s, not more than 5,000 Jews altogether remained in Syria, most of them in Damascus.

By then, Syria's reigning president, Hafez al-Assad had undergone the trauma of the Yom Kippur War. His economy had been savagely battered. In the course of the diplomatic negotiations of 1974–75, it became as clear to him as to Egypt's Anwar al-Sadat that only the diplomatic support of the United States would lever Israeli troops off Arab soil. During the next two years, then, Assad lifted restrictions on the transfer of Jewish property, and a number of Jews managed to obtain passports and exit visas for "business trips" abroad. Not coincidentally, they were required to post "bonds" in the equivalent of \$6,000. Of course, the "bonds" were forfeited, and the Jewish population swiftly atrophied to less than a thousand by the 1980s, and to a third that number by the end of the century.

EGYPT

If Yemeni and Iraqi Jewry boasted a lineage extending back for centuries, even millennia, the majority of Egypt's 66,000 Jews (at the end of World War II) traced their native settlement back hardly more than four decades. Most were born in the Near East, but not in Egypt. Some were émigrés from the Ottoman Empire's former Arab provinces, and from North Africa and Corfu. During the 1920s and 1930s, they came precisely to shed their Asian inheritance, for Egypt under British rule offered refugees the opportunity of special "status" under European consular protection. As a result, the newcomers regarded themselves increasingly as "Europeans," members of that privileged economic and social class that included hundreds of thousands of British, French, Italians and Greeks. Later, to be sure, this favored extraterritoriality was withdrawn as a result of the Anglo-Egyptian Treaty of 1936; and by the end of World War II, most of the Jews in Egypt were stateless. Yet, as "local subjects," they still enjoyed full legal protection in their personal lives and business affairs.

They were almost exclusively a middle-class community. Beginning as petty merchants in Cairo and Alexandria, they flourished rapidly in both cities. Together with the Greeks and Armenians, they owned the finest shops, operated the most important textile firms. Hundreds of Jewish financiers served as executives in Egypt's banking and insurance systems. Jewish brokers played leading roles in the currency and cotton exchanges and in the stock market. Other Jews prospered as doctors and lawyers. The economic boom of World War II consolidated their already formidable position. They rarely encountered prejudice. Indeed, the larger Egyptian firms vied with each other in engaging Jewish executives. If nationalist resentment festered below the surface of Egyptian public life, it was directed toward the British, rarely toward the other minorities. Affluent, Europeanized, and for the most part French-speaking, the Jews of Egypt guarded their Jewish traditions as a source both of cultural pride and social status.

Central among those traditions in the 1920s and 1930s was Zionism. Zionist journals, libraries, and drama groups were active. Jews collected money for the Jewish National Fund, went to Palestine on visits, even invested money there. Then, in the

late 1930s, Egypt began to identify increasingly with the Arab cause, and Jews found it useful to become circumspect in their Zionist loyalties. In 1938 and 1939, two right-wing fringe groups, the Moslem brotherhood and Young Egypt, were setting a new and ominous tone, calling for a boycott of Egyptian Jewish businesses. That same year, a number of Jewish communal offices were bombed. Although anti-Jewish violence came to an abrupt end with the martial law of World War II, it was plain that xenophobia was mounting among an Egyptian nation that until the 1930s had maintained a wide distance between themselves and so-called "integral" Arabs.

Indeed, by the end of the war, King Farouk's militant new pan-Arab stance encouraged an authentically anti-Jewish fanaticism in Egypt. In November 1946, anti-Jewish demonstrations in Cairo and Alexandria were spurred on by the pro-royalist press. Hooligans smashed and ransacked Jewish shops, looted a Cairo synagogue. Ultimately, it was the Palestine partition debate in the United Nations, the creation of Israel, and the Arab-Israeli War in 1948–49 that threatened the communal survival of Egyptian Jewry. In 1947, a Companies Law was enacted, requiring at least 75 percent of all employees in private businesses to hold Egyptian citizenship. The blow was a crippling one for Jewish enterprises. On May 15, 1948, the day the Egyptian army launched its invasion of Palestine, hundreds of Egyptian Jews were arrested, ostensibly for Zionist plotting. Two weeks later, the government was empowered to confiscate the property of individuals whose activities were "detrimental to the state;" and shortly afterward the holdings of some hundred Jewish companies were sequestered. In August and September 1948, Egyptian nationalists alone were permitted to serve as brokers on the stock exchange, then to practice medicine. Bombs planted in Jewish neighborhoods killed and wounded 242 individuals.

In December 1948, the assassination of Prime Minister Mahmud al-Nuqrashi by the Moslem Brotherhood finally brought the terrorism to a halt. The new premier, Ibrahim al-Hadi, immediately and courageously emptied the prisons of "Zionist suspects" and filled them with members of the Moslem Brotherhood itself. The nation slowly returned to normal, to its characteristic easygoing indolence. In July 1949, the government released substantial portions of confiscated Jewish assets. Jewish schools were authorized to reopen, a Jewish communal newspaper to resume publication. Most significant of all, "non-Moslems" were allowed to leave the country without prejudice. Thus, taking advantage of the opportunity, some 30,000 Jews disposed of their homes and business between 1949 and 1951, transferred their holdings to European banks, and summarily departed for France, Italy, and Israel. Fully three-fifths of Egyptian Jewry remained, however, cautiously optimistic that stability would continue.

That expectation lasted barely three years. In 1952, a "Colonels' Revolution" overthrew King Farouk and established a republic under military rule. Within the next eighteen months, Gamal Abd al-Nasser emerged as undisputed leader of the officers' junta. Deliberately fanning the flames of anti-British and anti-Israel resentment, Nasser simultaneously focused public rancor on the European near-monopoly of Egyptian economic life. British, French, Greek, and Italian entrepreneurs were closed out of the national market. The Jews as a collectivity, in turn, were singled out as a putative Israeli fifth column. In December 1954, Nasser exploited a treason trial of eleven Egyptian Jews, who were convicted of spying for Israel, to brand the entire Egyptian-Jewish population as a "nest of traitors." During the ensuing winter months, Jewish shops were boycotted, Jewish importers deprived of their licenses, Jewish stock- and cotton-brokers denied access to their former underwriting houses. It was no less difficult for Jews to leave the country, even when exit visas were available. The market for Jewish properties had collapsed and the government prohibited money transfers abroad. Each month, the few hundred Jews who were allowed departure for Europe took with them the smallest fraction of their savings. Few of the 37,000 or so who remained managed to salvage their estates or their careers.

For this hostage Jewry, Egypt's humiliation in the Sinai-Suez War was a disaster even more far-reaching than the original Palestine War. Once again, the European minorities provided a convenient target. Tens of thousands of British, French, Italian, and Greek inhabitants were expelled from the country, their businesses confiscated. Yet retribution against the Jews was harshest of all. Within the space of a year, 21,000 of them were shipped out of the country. None was allowed to take with him more than thirty Egyptian pounds. Other Jews were allowed leeway to leave at their own timetable, although under the same financial constraints. By the end of 1959, approximately 36,000 Jews had departed for Israel, France, Italy, or Brazil, and other, smaller groups followed in ensuing years. By June 1967, not more than 3,000 Jews remained.

Their climactic ordeal took place in the aftermath of the Six-Day War. Shocked to near-hysteria by the scope of its military debacle, the Nasser government ar-

rested hundreds of Jews, including the aged rabbis of Cairo and Alexandria, and interned them in concentration camps. Three years passed before the prisoners were released. Most of them eventually succeeded in departing Egypt by paying out all they owned in bribes. The three of four hundred sick or aged Jews who remained lived essentially on funds transmitted by international Jewish charities. Of these, barely two hundred survived to extend tearful greetings to Menachem Begin in Cairo's Sharei Shamayim Synagogue, during the Israeli prime minister's visit of April 1979, a month after the signing of the Egyptian-Israeli peace treaty.

NORTH AFRICA

Libya

The trauma of Jewish departure from the Islamic world was not limited to the Middle East. Across the *Maghreb*, the exodus was played out on a wider scale, if only because the Jewish presence among North Africa's Berber populations was demographically more extensive than among Arabs and Egyptians. Among this vast scattering of some half-million Jews (in 1945), even the modest Jewish enclave in Libya was not spared. Libyan Jewry was an indigenous community, extending back to native tribes that had been proselytized by Jewish traders and refugees in Carthaginian times. While in no sense a prosperous or a vibrant minority, the Jews of Libya had enjoyed reasonable security under Berber, Ottoman, and (since 1911) Italian rule, even under Mussolini, who showed them favored treatment in peacetime, and protected them from the Germans in wartime. Numbering 32,000 by 1945, most earned their livelihoods as merchants and artisans in the cities of Tripoli and Benghazi; but a fourth of them lived a rather atavistic, semi-tribal existence in the desert interior.

In 1945, too—ironically, under British occupation—an eruption of anti-Jewish riots left several hundred Jews dead and wounded and destroyed over a thousand Jewish homes and shops. The outburst was linked to the emergent Libyan nationalist movement; and the emergent Palestine issue simply exacerbated the unrest. In June 1948, a renewal of violence inflicted additional Jewish casualties. By then, few Libyan Jews believed that it was possible to remain on in the country. Fortunately for them, in 1949 the Jewish Agency and the (Jewish) Joint Distribution Committee succeeded in organizing direct sailings from Benghazi to Haifa, or, alternately, to Brindizi and Naples. By the summer of 1951, virtually the entire Libyan Jewish population had jettisoned their businesses and homes and embarked for more assured security abroad. Whether their principal destinations were Israel or Italy, they were archetypal refugees, arriving in their new homelands in a state of near-destitution.

Morocco and Tunisia

Yet the bulk of North Africa's half-million Jews had devolved over the nineteenth and twentieth centuries into the ambit of French rule. As late as 1948, fully 285,000 of them were concentrated in Morocco. Algeria accounted for another 135,000, and Tunisia for an estimated 105,000. As in Libya, approximately two-thirds of this population traced their ancestry to Berber tribesmen who had been converted to Judaism nearly a millennium before, and whose vernacular, Judeo-Berber, subsequently remained distinct from that of their Moslem neighbors. A smaller number were Sephardim, descendants of Iberian Jews, and some of these maintained their own Ladino dialect.

Among this teeming littoral Jewry, the Moroccans were by far the most deprived, economically and culturally. Over the centuries, among the local sultans, they were reduced to near-pariah degradation, they lived in wretched ghettos that frequently were swept by epidemics and native mobs. Functioning by tradition with a *millet*—quasi-autonomous—governing hierarchy of their own, they were permitted to adjudicate their personal and communal affairs before their own rabbinical courts. The establishment of the French protectorate in 1912 assured them of more extensive physical security and even a measurable degree of economic improvement. But as late as 1948, perhaps half the Moroccan Jewish working population survived as peddlers and artisans, the rest as small shopkeepers, clerks, or manual laborers. Except for a handful of affluent merchant and professional families, urban Jews by and large continued to live in their own neighborhoods, still on the alert to occasional outbursts of Moslem violence.

On the other hand, the extensive concentration of Jews in Marrakech, Casablanca, and Fez provided Moroccan Jews with certain educational advantages. Their children had access to Alliance Israélite schools, which successive French administrations discreetly supported as effective disseminators of France's *mission civilizatrice*. Although the majority still received a more parochial Jewish education, the beacon of French culture shone before their eyes, too. They understood well that it was the

protection of France that enabled them to maintain their religious and communal traditions in relative peace. Manifestly, that protection broke down in World War II, when France's North African Empire was reserved for the administration of the collaborationist Vichy regime. Moroccan Jews lost their access to the local French economy, and even their business and professional licenses to minister to a substantial part of the native market; and of course Jews were purged from employment in government offices. The Vichy interregnum clearly represented a painful setback, but at least it was a brief one. It was the economic hardships of the postwar period that endured substantially longer. Even well into the early 1950s, the Joint Distribution Committee was obliged to provide relief for tens of thousands of Moroccan Jews.

Yet the principal threat to Moroccan Jewry emerged from two major political changes. The first was the establishment of Israel and the Palestine war of 1948, which unleashed Moslem pogroms. Crowds of Berber *lumpenproletariat* invaded the Jewish sector of Oujda in June 1948, massacring scores of inhabitants, wounding many hundreds of others, and pillaging shops and homes. It was this assault that touched off a wave of emigration, mainly by the poorest and most devout sectors of the Jewish community, those who had least to lose by departure. By 1954, approximately 100,000 of these people had left, two-thirds of them for Israel, the rest for France.

The second political development was the emergence of a fiery indigenous Moroccan nationalism. By the early 1950s, a mounting series of riots and demonstrations against the French protectorate brought the country to brink of revolution; and in 1954 France's Prime Minister Pierre Mendès-France committed his government to Moroccan independence within two years. The prospect of Berber rule deeply unsettled Morocco's remaining Jewish population. It was at this point that the World Jewish Congress succeeded in establishing contact with Morocco's Istiqlal—nationalist leadership. Eager for Jewish support abroad, the Istiqlal spokesmen guaranteed their Jewish "brothers" full constitutional rights and political security in a free Morocco. If the Jews, however, did not wish to stay, they would have the right to emigrate to Israel or France.

Indeed, upon achieving independence in 1956, the new Moroccan regime honored its promise. Proclaiming complete equality for all inhabitants, the government included a Jew in its first cabinet, and continued to protect Jewish interests. It was economic, not political, failure that determine the Jews' course. With the loss of French capital and industry, the nation was reduced to near-bankruptcy. The likelihood of economic collapse was particularly frightening to those Jews who had remained on after the first wave of departures, most of them now middle-level or small businessmen, those who were more thoroughly attuned to French culture. Now, during the first ten months of Moroccan independence, another 33,000 Jews left the country, this time almost exclusively for France.

For its part, the Moroccan government continued to assure full security to its remaining Jewish citizens, and to recruit additional Jews into the government. In 1967, during the Six-Day War, King Hassan ordered the arrest of anyone engaged into anti-Jewish violence or even anti-Jewish propaganda. Yet emigration quietly continued through the 1960s and 1970s, and the government made no serious effort to restrict. By the end of the century, the Moroccan Jewish population had atrophied from its pre-World War II plateau of 285,000 to less than 10,000.

TUNISIA

the second of France's Maghreb protectorates, was a kind of North African Uruguay or Switzerland, enjoying a long Mediterranean coastline and a temperate climate. Of its 3,500,000 inhabitants by the end of the war, some 105,000 were Jews, and fully 70 percent of these lived in Tunis. They were by no means a backward or impoverished community. Nearly half of them earned their tolerable livelihoods as craftsmen, as small shopkeepers, or as functionaries in the French administration.

Indeed, under the French protectorate, the Jews enjoyed almost total physical security and civil equality on a par with the nation's Moslem subjects. As in Morocco, France's puppet sultanate respected the autonomy of its Jewish minority and even contributed financially to Jewish communal institutions. Here, too, the wartime Vichy administration represented a setback in Jewish legal rights, but the Italian Control Commission in Tunisia protected the Jews' physical security, and their basic economic freedom of action. After the war, and between 1948 and 1953, some 18,000 Tunisian Jews emigrated to Israel; yet these were essentially poor and backward Jews from the bled, the tribal interior. Few urban Jews were interested in joining them.

In the following years, however, tensions mounted between the Tunisian Neo-Destour nationalists and the French administration. The sequence of bombings and retaliations increased in scope and ferocity. The Jews were deeply unsettled. They maintained equitable relations with both the French government and their Moslem neighbors; yet their businesses were hard hit by the months of strikes, violence, and mass arrests. Privately, the nationalist leaders had assured their Jewish contacts that an independent Tunisia would guarantee equality for all citizens. Habib Bourguiba, leader of the Neo-Destour Party, endorsed this commitment personally. Most Jews were prepared to accept it. Indeed, many Jews supported the Neo-Destour in its struggle for self-rule. In 1956, when France finally granted Tunisia its independence, Jews joined Moslems in the street celebrations.

Indeed, Jewish security was unaffected at first. Most of the civil service remained French, and, by treaty, French troops stayed on the crucial ports and military bases of the country. Public order was maintained. Several Jews held prominent positions in the Tunisian cabinet and public administration. Jews were among Prime Minister (later President) Bourguiba's closest friends and associates. In every respect, they enjoyed identical civil and political rights with Moslems, and the government continued partially to subsidize Jewish communal activities.

Even so, Jews were concerned for their economic stability under a Moslem regime. In 1955, on the eve of independence, the nation's Jewish population still totaled approximately 90,000. By 1963, it had fallen to 60,000. As in Morocco, poorer and more devout Jews had left earlier for Israel. The largest numbers of those departing now settled in France. Although a majority of this shrinking remnant still remained in Tunisia, their ambivalence was abruptly resolved by a shattering military confrontation between Tunisians and the French. Early in 1962, responding to nationalist pressures, Bourguiba decided to reclaim the port and arsenal of Bizerte, facilities that had been reserved to France by earlier treaty agreement. When he ordered his troops into the protected area, however, they were annihilated by French military gunfire. An orgy of strikes and rioting then followed, and soon the nation's economy was all but paralyzed.

For the Jews, caught in this chauvinist upheaval, it was not the time to risk further delay. Within the following year, their remaining population was halved. Afterward, a steady, if slower, exodus continued. It was influenced both by the government's increasingly militant pro-Arab stance on the Israel issue and by its shift toward domestic socialism. The cabinet had already declared a state monopoly in sugar, coffee, tea, fruits, grain, hides and cattle. Thousands of Jewish businessmen accordingly witnessed the elimination of their occupations. It was only a question of time, most believed, before they were liquidated altogether as a commercial element. Departure now inevitably would mean the abandonment of homes and businesses—the transfer of capital abroad had recently been disallowed—but younger Jews were unwilling to procrastinate. With or without resources, they made for the harbors and embarked for France. Later, they sent for their parents. By 1965, some 80,000 Jews were living in France, and less than 8,000 remained behind. Today, their remaining population is estimated at less than 2,000.

Algeria

For the Jews of Algeria, France was not simply the protector. It was la patrie. They numbered 135,000 at war's end, a community less than half the size of Moroccan Jewry. Yet if they represented a mere 1.4 percent of Algeria's inhabitants, they comprised nearly 14 percent of the country's 950,000 European settlers. Unlike their fellow Jews in the Maghreb, Algerian Jews were substantially of Sephardic origin, tracing their roots back to Spain. Reduced to dhimmi status under Moslem rule in the ensuing centuries, they were also the first North African Jews to enjoy the blessings of French rule, in 1830. Indeed, forty years later, Paris extended French citizenship to Algerian Jewry (as it had at the outset to the country's other European inhabitants). Henceforth, unlike their kinsmen in Tunisia and Morocco, Algerian Jews shared all the rights and privileges of Frenchmen. Living mainly in Algiers, Oran, and Constantine, they were a predominantly commercial element, although of a somewhat more advanced status than in Tunisia and Morocco. Several thousand of them also held positions in the civil service and in the professions.

At the same time, well into the twentieth century, even the best-educated and most galvanized Algerian Jews were not quite accepted by their European fellow citizens. If they attended French schools, moved freely in commercial and professional life, they still found themselves in a social ghetto—a European social ghetto. Moreover, Algerian Jewry suffered even more acutely from the Dreyfus Affair than had the Jews of France; for the colons of Algeria were as prototypically xenophobic as any irredentist minority in Europe. Indeed, the settlers' right-wing virulence continued on into the 1930s, when hatred of Léon Blum's Popular Front government erupt-

ed into riots, the vandalization of synagogues and Jewish shops in Algiers, the murder of a score of Jews in Constantine. The facts bear repeating: it was not the Algerian Berbers who launched this violence. Their relations with the Jews were indifferent at worst, equable at best.

As in other countries in the French Maghreb, the circumstances of Algerian Jewry became authentically precarious only after the surrender of France in June 1940. With the French Empire reserved by Nazi dispensation to the new Vichy regime, Algerian Jews were immediately drummed out of the French army. The entire Jewish population of Algeria was stripped of its French citizenship. Jewish functionaries were purged from the Algerian administration, their children expelled from French schools. Jewish businessmen and professionals were barred from Algeria's European economy. The ordeal lasted two and a half years, until November 1942, when American troops liberated French North Africa. It was indicative of the *colons'* pro-Vichy sympathies, however, that virtually the only local inhabitants to cooperate in the Allied liberation were Jews. Even after the Allied landings, a year passed before Jewish political rights were restored in French Algeria, and then mainly as a result of intense pressure from American Jewish organizations.

For Algerian Jewry, the period of restored "normalcy" and security endured barely a decade. By the mid-1950s, Berber resentment of French rule had burgeoned into a full-scale insurrection. The Jewish reaction to the ensuing slaughter and counterslaughter was confused. Younger Jews, most of the Socialists, sympathized with the FLN—Berber nationalist—demands for self-determination. After all, not a single major act of Berber terrorism thus far had been committed against Jews. Indeed, the nationalist leadership repeatedly assured the Jewish community of its safety and equality in a future Algerian state. On the other hand, it was known that much of the FLN's military equipment was coming from Egypt's President Nasser, and the prospect of being governed by a regime beholden to one of Israel's most implacable enemies was unsettling. As a result, the majority of Algeria's Jews remained in the background, publicly neutral, privately still hoping for a last-minute reprieve from a French departure.

The reprieved was not to be realized. Once Charles de Gaulle consolidated his presidential power in France, in 1959, he made clear his intention to phase out the *colons'* privileged status in Algeria. Worse yet, during the ensuing transitional period of French withdrawal, Berber xenophobia unexpectedly burst out against the Jews. In the last week of 1960, widespread anti-Jewish riots culminated in the pillaging of the Great Synagogue of Algiers. Although the violence was immediately repudiated by the FLN leadership, the Jewish community was deeply unnerved. Nor was it reassured by the French government's decision in July 1962 to withdraw its army and to accord full sovereignty to Algeria by the end of the year. It was then that the totality of the European settlement—950,000 *colons'*—embarked on a vast collective exodus to France. Their homes, farms, estates, businesses, and public institutions—the legacy of more than a century and a quarter of French rule—all were left behind. The 135,000 Jews of Algeria shared in the departure. With the exception of 5,000 among them, who migrated to Israel, they shared too in the collective European transmigration and resettlement in France.

Mr. ACKERMAN. And the reference you just made, the Jewish community, the refugees of the Arab world, is of great concern to the committee, and we would like to hear more about that, and we will develop that during the question period.

Thank you.
Dr. Telhami.

STATEMENT OF SHIBLEY TELHAMI, PH.D., ANWAR SADAT PROFESSOR FOR PEACE AND DEVELOPMENT, UNIVERSITY OF MARYLAND

Mr. TELHAMI. Thank you. I, too, am honored to be testifying next to my esteemed colleague Dr. Sachar, whom I know not only as an accomplished colleague, but more importantly as the father of one of my former students.

I really commend you on holding this hearing. This is an extremely important issue. I think it is clear that there will be no lasting Arab-Israeli peace unless the issue of refugees is addressed

in full, and I think people have to begin preparing for it, and I think the United States has a role to play.

Let me begin first by identifying the scope of the problem particularly among Palestinian refugees. We have heard about the Jewish refugees, and I think that is an important issue that needs to be put on the table and discussed.

While there are some disputes about numbers, most people now accept the United Nation's Relief and Works Agency, UNRWA, which has about 4½ million Palestinian refugees registered with it. In fact, by 1950, there were about 914,000 registered with UNRWA. Of those 4½ million, one-third, fully one-third still live in refugee camps, and about 59 identified refugee camps spread particularly in Jordan, the West Bank and Gaza, Lebanon, Syria and other parts of the Middle East and elsewhere.

If you look at the clustering, certainly the largest number is in Jordan. In Lebanon there are nearly 400,000, and they are in particularly difficult circumstances because, as you know, many of these refugees are stateless. In Jordan, Jordan is an exception in the sense that the refugees have been given Jordanian citizenship. In Lebanon, they are not only stateless, but they do not have—they are not entitled to state and social services, and they have very limited access to employment. So they are in desperate need in much of these countries, and we are talking about people who have been there for six decades, since 1948.

Gaza, for that matter, we think of Gaza as Palestinian. It is. It is a segment of Palestinian Territories, but the vast majority of people in Gaza are actually refugees themselves who primarily came from the areas surrounding Tel Aviv.

So we have a huge refugee problem, and I think just the human tragedy of this should propel the international community to intervene. And I know, for example, that Congress has in recent years focused on textbooks as a motivating factor in the behavior of young people amongst Palestinians. Well, I can tell you if you visit a refugee camp, you fully understand that the hardship of the condition—the conditions in the refugee camps, and the pervasive sense of injustice that people feel, the humiliation, is probably the biggest motivator of behavior of young people. I don't underestimate the importance of textbooks. I think it is an important issue that should be addressed, but I think the refugee issue, the conditions, are really central here that need to be addressed.

But I think it is also a mistake to look at the refugee problem simply as a problem of material compensation. I think it is that for sure, and no solution to that problem is going to take place without putting together a very strong material compensation and resettlement package of the refugees. That is essential.

I think, however, that even the bigger obstacles to a negotiated settlement between Israel and the Palestinians has been other aspects of this issue, because this issue has legal dimensions, psychological dimensions, political dimensions, moral dimensions, and they all have to be addressed and settled.

And here I would like to focus on primarily five points that I would like to make that I think would be essential for any settlement of the refugee issue to consider.

Let me start with the most difficult one: The issue of the right of return. I think it is clear that the Palestinian claim to right of return to their original homes in what is now Israel is one of the most difficult challenges to a peace agreement. I think despite that, I do not believe that it is beyond resolution, and I am going to tell you why even as I acknowledge that it is an extremely difficult issue to address.

First, I think the primary Israeli concern in—in the accepting the notion of a Palestinian right of return is that many Palestinians would choose to return and thus make Jews a minority in their own state. The real Israeli concern isn't so much pertaining to what Palestinians may claim as a right, but rather what that right may entail for Israel immediately in a settlement and in the future, whether there would be further claims put on Israel for actual return of Palestinians to Israel in a way that would change Israel's character as a Jewish state, and also in terms of putting demands for compensation, using that as a negotiating issue.

Nonetheless, I think it is highly unlikely that the Palestinians will stop demanding an acknowledgment of the right of return before an agreement, just as it is highly unlikely that the Israelis are likely to accept the notion of a right of return by the Palestinians before they know what the actual terms of the agreement are.

And I think we have to keep here in perspective, one, the psychological dimension, but also, more importantly, I think, the ultimate legal dimension for both Israel and the Palestinians.

On the psychological side, the reason why this issue is so important for the Palestinians, it has defined their struggle for the past six decades. And when you—when a refugee struggles day in and day out, they explain that struggle, the parents explain it. They explain it to themselves, the hardship, as coming out of a right that they have that they retain. And it is impossible to persuade people who believe that, who see that they have legal rights or norms as they understand them, who have a particular sense of justice that has defined their own identity as Palestinians, to say you don't have a right. It as if you say to them, your struggle has been meaningless. You have been tricked. This is all on your shoulders. You have been fools all this period. No one is going to accept that.

There is also a legal issue which is a bit more complicated. Let us put aside for a moment the phrase of the "right of return." There seems to be an objection to that phrase. Put it aside. And most people who refer to this issue obviously refer to a body of international law, but, most importantly, U.N. resolution and especially Resolution 194.

Resolution 194 does not specifically refer to "a right of return," but here is what it says. It says that refugees wishing to return to their homes and live in peace with their neighbors should be permitted to do so at the earliest practicable date, and that compensation should be paid for the properties of those who choose not to.

Now, what that resolution does is, in essence, places the choice in the hands of the refugees, not in the hands of Israel. So when you look at that, when Palestinians refer to that, they interpret that as a right that emanates from a resolution that is a U.N. resolution.

I don't want to debate resolutions or international legality. What I want to say is the following: That even from the Israeli point of view, what Israel needs to have in an agreement is an agreement that secures Israel as a Jewish state with a Jewish majority and therefore to limit the number of refugees who will return, in fact, to Israel and will limit the future claims. Israel wants an agreement that does not open up the possibility in the future for people to make claims about return. That is what Israel wants.

But, see, you can't do that unless you close a file. And the only way you close a file is by saying, Here is—the following steps of resettlement, of refugees' compensation, are a fulfillment of all of the claims emanating from Palestinians pertaining to the right of return in conjunction with the following U.N. resolutions.

So unless you actually refer to them, you can't put them to rest. Unless you actually accept them, you can't put them to rest. They are going to come back to haunt you even if there is an agreement. Nobody—no signatory can take that away from people collectively unless you have it as part of an agreement.

So it seems to me that in the end, there is no getting around this, not just psychologically but legally, and to close the file for an almost simultaneous—simultaneous—Israel knowing exactly what the compensation is, what the package is, and simultaneously accepting that this package, which is agreed upon, will be in fulfillment of claims to the right of return in conjunction with these resolutions and body of international law. They have to be simultaneous. I can't imagine Israel accepting the right of return before knowing what the package is, but I can't believe that Palestinians would accept the package that does not acknowledge it.

And so the simultaneous acceptance here is crucial, and that is why I think second-track negotiations and mediations are going to be important, because no party is going to give away its card until a deal is signed.

A second point I want to make is a practical settlement. In the end, it is all about what are the practical steps, and that obviously is crucial. In some ways, the practical settlement is the easiest to contemplate, the easiest to conceive. And it is in some ways defined—one has to differentiate, as I argued earlier, between rights and specific settlement of claims to these rights. There is a right, and there is a settlement of claims.

A practical settlement is basically a settlement of claims to the rights. It is not about rights as such, but it is about settling all claims that people may have about rights that are accepted. And those practical issues are really defined by the nature of an agreement between Israel and the Palestinians.

If you look at how all negotiations in recent years have contemplated that settlement, it is a settlement based on the notion of a two-state solution: One for Jews and one for Palestinians. That two-state solution is essentially framing the conflict between Jews and Palestinians. They start a conflict in nationalistic terms, not in ethnic terms as such, not in Arab terms or in Jewish terms as such, not in religious terms. It is defining it in nationalist terms.

A state that would manifest Palestinian nationalism is a state that would manifest Jewish nationalism. By default, it means that Israel is a Jewish state with a Jewish majority, and therefore I

think most people understand that any such state, any such solution, a two-state solution, does mean a solution that is compatible with maintaining Israel as a Jewish state, and that is in practical terms, I think it is clear that, in the end, most Palestinians will not return to Israel.

Now, how does that work, though, in terms of rights and choices? I think the most important issue here is that refugees must have—must be given choices for compensation. It is already clear that when research was done among refugees, Palestinian refugees, to see if they had options, multiple options, such as being citizens of a Palestinian state or settling somewhere else and going to Israel, a majority do not choose to go to Israel as given these other options. But Israel is not going to trust that, obviously, and I think therefore the Israelis are likely going to limit the number that they will admit. They have already said they will accept a very limited number.

And so I think what is important here is for the rights of the refugees to be implemented by giving them choices, real choices, and I think that includes citizenship, and the choice is not just compensation, it is permanent settlement with full citizenship, and those options will include citizenship in the State of Palestine, in the West Bank and Gaza; citizenship in some countries where they are hosted, but that has to be done in negotiations with those countries because this is a complicated issue for some like Lebanon; and three, options given by the international community such as Canada, Europe, and the United States; and four, a lottery of people who might be among those chosen to go to Israel by the limited number allowed by the Israeli State.

And I think if you put that kind of choice in front of Palestinians, you are going to have the vast majority finding a solution in those packages provided to them.

The third point I want to make is about what is called historical justice. I think if we read the histories of Jews, Palestinians, Arabs, some of the history that Dr. Sachar just recounted of the dilemma and the pain of the Jewish community in the Middle East over the years, everybody has a narrative and a narrative related to justice, and that justice issue is important relative to who they are.

I think no one has a monopoly on justice. Each one has its own view of what is just unless it is obviously emanating from some body of legal—of law and international resolutions. But, in general, each one has its own sense of justice, and that sense of justice cannot in and of itself be the primary source of a settlement. Clearly not. I mean, that is—nonetheless, it cannot be ignored, and that is what I want to say.

I think if you look at any lasting solution of protracted conflict, it is hard to imagine that you can have a transformation of psychology simply by signing an agreement. You have to have coming to terms with history, including people's sense of historical justice.

Nonetheless, what I believe in that regard is the only way to do it is to have a Truth in Reconciliation Commission after an agreement, not before an agreement. I think the South African model has been extremely important because it is much more difficult for people to come to grips with history, to be honest about mistakes,

and, yes, even crimes, when they know they are not going to be punished for them or they are not going to affect the actual outcome of the settlement. And I think, nonetheless, such a Truth and Reconciliation Commission should be mandated by an agreement as something that would follow on the agreement.

The fourth issue is the linkage between Jewish refugees and Palestinian refugees. Here I speak very much to the issue that Dr. Sachar raised. Clearly, the issue of Jewish refugees from Arab states is an important one. It needs to be addressed. We have to know that history. We have to know what claims remain, including claims to property compensation or even political claims if people seek to do that.

There are some similarities between Palestinian refugee issues and Jewish refugee issues, but nonetheless, there are huge differences, and those huge differences suggest that it is neither in the interest of Israel nor in the interest of Palestinians to link them together in the bilateral Israel-Palestinian negotiations. It is a mistake to do so except in multilateral settings where the issue is primarily about compensation emanating from different sources. And let me tell you why. There are two reasons why.

The first reason is that the primary responsibility of the Palestinian refugee issue, the primary party in negotiating on the Palestinian refugee issue is Israel. It is between Israel and the Palestinians primarily. It involves others, but primarily it is a bilateral issue between Israel and the Palestinians, and obviously, the settlement package involves other parties.

The issue of Jewish refugees is primarily a bilateral issue between Israel and Arab states, Israel and Morocco, Israel and Algeria, Israel and Yemen and so forth. And those issues are not—they are not part of the same basket of bilateral negotiations.

The second reason why it is important from Israel's point of view, I think if you link them together and suggest the same options of settlements as you would for Jewish refugees and Palestinian refugees, here is what you are going to face: Arabs have said, and they will say that again, that they want to say to Jewish refugees, you are welcome to come back and be full citizens of our state. Now granted, most Israeli Jews who came from Arab countries are not going to go back, but they will put it on the table, and they will insist that that is the package—that that is the most important primary right of a refugee to go back, and Israel will not do the same, and you are going to create a dilemma that is going to actually limit the Israel maneuverability in negotiating with the Palestinians. And I think you are going to have a double standard issue that is going to make it far more difficult than people think.

So I think there should be a clear separation of these issues. Where this issue of putting all of these refugees on the table comes in multilateral negotiations, and there has to be multilateral negotiations particularly when it comes to packages of compensation and who should contribute to them, where they should come from, and the responsibility of individual states.

Final point I want to make is related to this, which is the role of United States and the international community. While the Palestinian refugee issue is primarily an Israel-Palestinian issue, it involves host countries, it involves international agencies, and it in-

volves countries, that they provide final options for refugees. It is also going to be extremely costly to come up with a compensation package that is going to make a difference, and there is no question that there will be need for international contributions, major international contribution; and it is also important for the parties, even in the negotiations, to put forth options that are attractive, including options of absorbing some refugees that would be attractive to the Palestinian refugees.

And therefore, I think the role of the international community is going to be very important and not only after an agreement is reached, but even before an agreement is reached. You are putting forth a package on the table, and I suggest that there should be—the United States should take the lead in organizing an effort that starts preparing for such a package.

Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

[The prepared statement of Mr. Telhami follows:]

PREPARED STATEMENT OF SHIBLEY TELHAMI, PH.D., ANWAR SADAT PROFESSOR FOR
PEACE AND DEVELOPMENT, UNIVERSITY OF MARYLAND

Mr. Chairman,

I commend you on holding a hearing on the important subject of refugees the resolution of which is essential for a lasting Arab-Israeli peace settlement. Six decades after the onset of the conflict hundreds of thousands of Palestinian refugees remain stateless and living in humiliating conditions in refugee camps. Today, there are approximately 4.5 Million refugees registered with the United Nation Relief and Works Agency (UNWRA) and hundreds of thousands more who had become refugees after the 1967 war and who are classified as "displaced" individuals. Some, like the 400,000 refugees in Lebanon are not only stateless but have little access to jobs and social services in their host country. The vast majority of Gaza's population is made up of refugees who left in 1948 from what is now central Israel—with many remaining in crowded camps.

This human tragedy should alone propel the international community to act. I know that there has been much focus in Congress in recent years on the issue of text books as motivating factors for young Palestinians. This is certainly a legitimate area of discussion, but it should also be clear that the miserable conditions of refugee camps coupled with a pervasive sense of injustice provide far more powerful motivations.

Changing the living conditions of refugees will be central, but it is a mistake to think that the issue of Palestinian refugees is only an issue of material compensation and settlement. There are important political, legal, psychological, and moral aspects to this issue that have been even bigger barriers to its resolution. Unless a peace settlement finds way to address these aspects, it is unlikely to be stable.

Allow me to briefly articulate five central issues for the resolution of the Palestinian refugee problem:

1. *The Issue of "Right of Return":* The Palestinian refugee claim to the right of return to their original homes in what is now Israel is one of the most difficult challenges to a peace agreement. But it is not beyond resolution. The primary Israeli concern in accepting a Palestinian "right of return" is that many Palestinians would choose to return and thus make Jews a minority in their own state. Thus it is highly unlikely that Israelis would recognize a Palestinian "right of return" before the shape of a final settlement on refugees is already agreed. It is also certain that Palestinians will continue to demand an acknowledgement of such right as a pre-condition for any agreement. This is not merely a bargaining tactic intended to maximize compensation from Israel, but a deeply held conviction that's tied to how Palestinians have defined their struggle in the past six decades. The right of return" has been the single most important issue that has mobilized refugees into a political movement in the past 59 years and has become part of Palestinian identity. It has provided the moral explanation for all the hardship that two generations of refugees have painfully endured. It is a highly emotional issue whose acknowledgment could go a long way toward healing.

But the issue is also partly legal; in the end Israel's interest in closing the files of potential refugee claims once and for all entails acknowledging par-

ticular rights, claims to which are settled through practical arrangements. Even if one ignores the specific phrase “right of return,” Israel would still have to contend with UN resolutions and other bodies of international law that allow Palestinians to file claims, individually and collectively. This is certainly true of UN resolution 194, which stipulates that “that the refugees wishing to return to their homes and live at peace with their neighbors should be permitted to do so at the earliest practicable date, and that compensation should be paid for the property of those choosing not to return and for loss of or damage to property which, under principles of international law or in equity, should be made good by the Governments or authorities responsible.” In other words, the choice of return rests with refugees. In this regard, Israel’s interest is also in seeing that all legal claims such as emanating from UN Resolution 194 are settled once and for all, with Palestinians foregoing future claims. This suggests that both the acknowledgement of Palestinian rights and the specific settlement of claims to these rights must be simultaneous.

2. *Practical Settlement.* One must differentiate between “rights” and the specific settlement of claims to these rights. The practical steps to settle refugee claims are well defined by the nature of a political settlement. The basis of a two-state solution to the Palestinian-Israeli conflict is a nationalist framing of the conflict that sees a need for Jews and Palestinians to have states of their own. This entails Israel as a state with a Jewish majority, and thus Israel will not accept the return of most Palestinian refugees to Israel itself. In reality, some Palestinian polls suggest that even if given a chance to return to their homes in Israel, Palestinians would choose other alternatives if available. The key issue here is not so much the compensation for property, but the actual permanent resettlement of refugees. What is central is providing refugees with options including compensation. Those options could include citizenship in the Palestinian state in the West Bank and Gaza, settlement in host countries as negotiated, perhaps multilaterally with these countries, settlement in potential countries in the West, including Europe, the United States and Canada, and a lottery for a limited number, agreed upon between Israel and the Palestinians, for possible settlement in Israel itself. Israel has already signaled at various stages a possible willingness to accept a limited number of Palestinian refugees so long as it does not alter Israel’s Jewish majority.
3. *“Historical Justice”:* No one has monopoly on justice, but each group’s sense of justice provides motivation that’s hard to ignore. While a political settlement cannot be primarily based on either side’s notion of what is just, these notions cannot be entirely ignored in the pursuit of a lasting settlement. But a process of examining issues of historical justice that could bring healing after decades of painful conflict can only occur after an agreement is signed. A peace agreement must establish a “truth and reconciliation commission” similar to the one established in South Africa to review historical claims. It is much easier to tell the full historical story and to have maximal honesty when the results will not affect the actual terms of a settlement or lead to punishment of those found to have committed crimes.
4. *Linkage with Jewish Refugees.* The issue of Jewish refugees from Arab states is an important one and must also be raised and discussed in the context of a comprehensive settlement of the Arab-Israeli conflict. While both the Palestinian refugee issue and the Jewish refugee issue have some common elements, it is important to also note differences that suggest minimizing the link at the bilateral Israeli-Palestinian level. First, the primary Palestinian refugee claims are with Israel, while Jewish refugee claims are not with the Palestinians but with Arab states. Second, it is not even an Israeli interest to create a direct link and suggest unified solutions: Many Arab states are prepared to accept return of Jews to these countries, but Israel is not prepared to accept most Palestinian refugees. Thus the place for such linkage is primarily in multilateral negotiations pertaining to the costs of compensation and the responsibilities of the various parties in contributing their share to these costs.
5. *The Role of the United States and the International Community.* While the Palestinian refugee issue is at the core an Israeli-Palestinian issue, it also involves host countries, international agencies, and other countries that may provide final settlement options for refugees. The costs of compensation will inevitably be high, thus in practice requiring major international contributions. All this entails a need for international role, especially American, in

coordinating multilateral efforts that will be required not only in implementing agreements reached, but in providing options that make an agreement possible.

Mr. ACKERMAN. Thank you very much. I don't want to argue the legality of in effect U.N. resolutions. I just do want to point out that I believe U.N. Resolution 194 was a General Assembly resolution, not a Security Council resolution. Does not have the force of international law.

All of my grandparents fled countries as well. They came here. They were absorbed. They became citizens. They were allowed full participation in society, the ability to vote, the ability to get jobs. Their children had that ability, their grandchildren. Any job they wanted, even this modest one.

Jews fled from various places and went to places in Europe where they were absorbed, where they became citizens, where they became premiers, as was pointed out. Why is it in the Arab world they deny Palestinian refugees the same rights and dignity that other countries outside of the Arab world give to Jews, Arabs and others? Why are they lingering in camps? I have never heard of a Jewish refugee camp. I have heard of neighborhoods in Brooklyn, I grew up in one, but not refugee camps. Why is it that that exists?

Mr. TELHAMI. Mr. Chairman, first of all, not all of the countries treated them equally. Let's not generalize completely because the truth of the matter is Jordan did absorb them as citizens and they play a very important role in Jordan. And that includes, by the way—

Mr. ACKERMAN. I believe your testimony, which we didn't get last night, but we got it this morning so we haven't had a chance to absorb it all, but I believe it said something like 4½ million Palestinian refugees, a third of which are in refugee camps. So that is what?

Mr. TELHAMI. About 1.3 million in camps.

Mr. ACKERMAN. Of these, how many of them are themselves refugees rather than the children and grandchildren of refugees?

Mr. TELHAMI. Well, a refugee is defined by UNWRA as refugees and their descendants. So primarily—

Mr. ACKERMAN. So I am a refugee.

Mr. TELHAMI. Descendents of refugees.

Mr. ACKERMAN. So everybody in the room is a refugee unless they are Mohawks or Algonquins.

Mr. TELHAMI. In the context of the Palestinians, because these are people defined in particular communities, but, yes, descendants of refugees are considered refugees. By now, 60 years later, obviously most of the population is descendants of refugees.

Mr. ACKERMAN. Even if they have been absorbed and become citizens of countries?

Mr. TELHAMI. In some instances, in the case of Jordan, yes.

Mr. ACKERMAN. Talking about Palestinians only. You are not talking about other human beings on the planet.

Mr. TELHAMI. I am talking about, yes, I mean, most of the Palestinians in the Arab world, except for Jordan, are actually stateless. They do not have citizenship.

Mr. ACKERMAN. Why aren't they given citizenship?

Mr. TELHAMI. That is what I was going to answer. If you look at that, I don't defend the poor behavior, the horrible behavior of Arab governments over the years, in every respect. Authoritarian leaders not just in relation to the Palestinian issue, in relation to their own people, in relation to how they performed in servicing some of the poor neighborhoods and cities.

Mr. ACKERMAN. Are these Palestinian people in those countries where they are treated poorly, are they inferior human beings?

Mr. TELHAMI. Can I answer you on this one, because the point is I am not defending Arab countries.

Mr. ACKERMAN. I have that question, are they considered inferior human beings?

Mr. TELHAMI. Not in Jordan, not in Egypt, and I think in Lebanon the status—

Mr. ACKERMAN. Iraq, Lebanon, are they inferior human beings?

Mr. TELHAMI. Many rulers consider their population to be inferior human beings.

Mr. ACKERMAN. Their whole population. But their whole population are loyal citizens and recognize them as citizens.

Mr. TELHAMI. Congressman, can I answer the primary first question about what happened.

Mr. ACKERMAN. I am going to come back to it, though. I am going to write it down because I am old and I forget things.

Mr. TELHAMI. The first question is: Why did it happen? There are 2 reasons for it. I can tell you the two reasons. One reason, and we shouldn't underestimate it and write it off and shove it under the rug, which is that most Palestinians initially didn't want to settle. Most Palestinians really went there with the aim of coming back the next day, the following day, et cetera, and they believed that—remember, these are not long distances like Europe and the United States, in some cases from Haifa to Janin, you are talking about just a few miles.

So people initially, particularly as they mobilize politically, have the aim of going back, and they were making a political statement and the leaders were making a political statement. But the governments themselves clearly failed them and have abused them. In a particular country like Lebanon where they fall in between the difficult demographic balance that Lebanon has between its different sects, the Shi'a, Sunni and the Christian, and all of that has affected the location of the Palestinians in that community.

But Arab governments have failed. No one would suggest that they have not. I think the real issue remains though is where the primary responsibility lies. Arab governments have responsibilities. They have to be part of this—part of the fixing of the problem. But the main issue and the main claims are the Palestinians remain the same.

And so in the end, I think we can talk about responsibility, and if I can open up the issue of responsibility, which I think has to be opened up at some point, the problem with it is that you are going to have a debate ongoing with people blaming Israel, blaming the Arab world on the responsibility issue, and not being able to resolve it, and that is why I think the Truth in Reconciliation Commission in the end is going to tell the bigger story about who is more responsible.

But in the meanwhile, you have to limit yourself to the body of law that is out there, the practical claims, and the nature of the political settlement as defining what it is that you are going to achieve in a settlement.

Mr. ACKERMAN. Well, you have made it very tempting to go off in five different directions right now. Inasmuch as you have opened the issue of responsibility, it seems to some that in 1948 after the civilized world through the United Nations declared Israel a state, it was attacked by the Arab world, creating all these refugees that fled to the countries that attacked Israel. So they bear the responsibility in the minds of many, including myself, for initiating the action that created the refugees in the first place. That is that for responsibility.

Now that these refugees are located in so many of these countries and treated as not even second class citizens because they are not citizens at all, I will come back to my question, are they inferior human beings?

Mr. TELHAMI. Well, of course they are not.

Mr. ACKERMAN. That is a good start. If they are not inferior human beings and they are prevented from joining and integrating in most ways into society, there must be a reason for not allowing them to be integrated into society. It is not because they are inferior, not because they are diseased, not because they are going to—they are not as good as anybody else.

Why are they not allowed to integrate into those societies? The conclusion that I reach and others as well is that they are held in that status to be used as political pawns to make a point politically, and now you have 4½ million of them, and in another generation, you will have 9 million of them, and in another generation, while the Commission is meeting to decide on whatever it is you wanted them to decide. How do you accommodate these people being mistreated like that?

Mr. TELHAMI. Well, first of all, I think that if you look at any country where you don't have—its noncitizens are treated differently from citizens; I mean, I think we don't treat illegal residents in the same way that we treat legal residents here.

Mr. ACKERMAN. There is a process for them to become citizens. And when people are refugees, we allow them into that process. Refugees are not considered illegal immigrants in this country, not in the America that I know. There are illegal immigrants. But refugees aren't illegal.

Mr. TELHAMI. I am not saying they are the same, not every country treats everybody in its own jurisdiction in the same way because there are legal distinctions about what their status is. This is not a justification of what Arab governments have done in the past, and I think in the end, Arab governments, in most cases, are going to have to put on the table the option of absorbing some of the Palestinian refugees as an option for them, as one of the options available to them for permanent settlement.

So in that sense you have a point. The point is that even if the Palestinians were allowed to settle, as happened in Jordan, it hasn't removed the drive because the issue is bigger, even if governments are responsible in the Arab world, the issue itself is bigger than that, much bigger than that.

Mr. ACKERMAN. We have to have a second round because I have more questions. But first, Mr. Pence.

Mr. PENCE. Thank you, chairman. I thank the witnesses for some bracing and informative and candid presentations. I would start with you, Dr. Sachar. Why didn't the Oslo peace process in the 1990s deal with the issue of Jewish refugees, in your judgment? If I can frame that a little bit and let you think about your answer.

I think a great deal of your testimony today is virtually completely unknown among the American people. I mean, it is—certainly the chairman has personal familial history that has been impacted by this extraordinary persecution, and to use your phrase, exodus from North Africa and from countries across the Arab world. But I think it is largely unknown in this country.

Does that account for the reason why the issue was not dealt with at Oslo? And how do you, number one, first respond to that question if you would, respectfully? Secondly, how can we bring this issue into the mainstream of the Middle East peace process itself?

Mr. SACHAR. It is a very legitimate question, Congressman. I tend to agree with Professor Telhami on several points. I think that the inhibition of the discussions at Oslo on the refugee question is because both sides were realistic enough to know that the question of compensation or repatriation were nonstarters and that no territorial agreement would be achieved if that issue was thrust down their throat. Rabin was a very hard line person, even though he represented the Labor Party and he was not to be exceeded in his adamancy on this issue by any member of the Israeli political opposition.

But I think that if he would have lived, I think that probably he would have seen the wisdom of settling certain psychological problems that loom, as Dr. Telhami has indicated, very much in front of the Arab mind as a collectivity.

By a curious coincidence, that issue was addressed many years later by Yossi Beilin, who was a member of an unofficial negotiating team that met with counterparts in the Arab world, members of the Palestinian Liberation Organization and at Geneva and they came up with a protocol in which the issue of refugees actually was addressed and it was to acknowledge that there was a refugee problem and that morally a lot of Arab refugees of 1948 and 1949 were entitled to come back to Israel but the Arabs would forfeit that right, and thereby I come back again to Dr. Telhami's point that the Israelis had to know where the final issue would rest, that you were not opening a Pandora's Box for subsequent claims.

I think the formula that was proposed by Dr. Beilin was a realistic one but the practical solution is not simply in acknowledging the moral right of one people to come back to its land, the practical solution is a gerrymandering of territories. And this is suggested in many discussions that took place under the aegis of President Clinton.

If you acknowledge the right of one people to be recognized in the injustice that was perpetrated upon them, then deal with them in a way that satisfies their sense of international obligation, not by a transmigration of refugees that is a nonstarter with every people since the Second World War, and since the Greco-Turkish War in

1920 and 1922. These peoples were not realistically going to return. You can acknowledge their right but know that the right is to be circumscribed by events and realities.

And so if you acknowledge their right, the issue of compensation becomes the legitimate issue for discussion and negotiation between the two parties. I am for that. I think any conscious-stricken member of our country, any moral person will acknowledge that both peoples have rights and they have to be addressed, but not addressed by the practical solution of a re-transmigration of peoples. That is a nonstarter.

Mr. PENCE. Doctor, thank you very much for that thorough answer. Dr. Telhami, I am very struck by this as a concept. I think you might have been able to tell in my opening statement, I bristled a little bit at even the title of this hearing because I see them—there is a great deal of world opinion about the one, there is a great deal of world ignorance about the other.

Is there, in your judgment, a benefit talking about both of these things simultaneously and in a more equitable way? I was very moved by your comments about the notions of justice because it seems to me as I find myself in debates from time to time, and panels, not to the extent that you are involved with them around the country, but people very frequently talk to me about the Palestinian refugee issue, and I am not sure that this isn't the first public forum where I have ever heard any discussion about the historic travesty of Jewish refugees.

Mr. TELHAMI. I agree with you, first of all, that there is not enough known about Jewish refugees and there are obviously a number of historical accounts on what transpired. More should be told on it. I think it is a legitimate issue to put on the table. A lot of them were derivative of the 1948 Arab-Israeli War, and in the context of Israel agreeing to comprehensive peace with Arab states where people are going to put a package that is comprehensive, there is no question that that is an issue that should be put on the table, in my mind.

The question that I raised, of course, is about whether or not it is an issue that should be brought into the bilateral Israeli-Palestinian discussions on refugees, and I suggested that it is not a very good idea to do that. The place for it is when you are talking about multilateral compensation packages and responsibilities of Arab states, and there are responsibilities of Arab states on that score.

I also think that the refugee issue, we don't spend enough time talking about it in this country. We sort of mention it, whether it is in the Sudan, for example, or now the refugees out of Iraq. The 1948 conflict was not just a refugee issue, it was a political issue, and that is what makes it very difficult. The refugee issue only reinforces the complex political issues in the region.

And in the case of Iraq, I mean, Jordan has absorbed 1 million refugees from Iraq. It is a country of about 5 million people. And Syria next door is hosting possibly up to 3/4-million refugees. And there are poor countries with limited populations, and they are dealing with it and obviously the international community is trying to help with that, but are we aware of this even though we are involved in the Iraq war, are we making enough issue on it, and we

are not hosting enough refugees here out of Iraq. I think we have to think about this collectively.

I as an American, for example, feel a sense of responsibility to the refugees coming out of Iraq, given our role in the war.

Mr. PENCE. You would be glad to know, Dr. Telhami, we have explored that issue and had a hearing in this subcommittee on that very topic.

Mr. TELHAMI. I appreciate that and I think we need to do more of it. I know Congress has brought it up and put the administration under pressure on this and I think that is a good thing because there is a humanitarian issue that always should trump everything else and then there is a political issue. The Arab-Israeli conflict is certainly in part there are humanitarian issues like the refugee issues, but it is also a complex political issue and that is why makes it even more difficult.

We have to figure out how we untangle the two to lead to a lasting agreement. It is not enough for us to go out and mediate something, and 2 years down the road, we have reopening of the same issue.

Mr. PENCE. Thank you. Thank you, chairman.

Mr. ACKERMAN. Ms. Jackson Lee.

Ms. JACKSON LEE. I can certainly echo that I think it is important to have a balanced perspective on this question and a balanced perspective from my viewpoint does not demean or belittle anyone's pain. I frankly believe that no discussion should leave out the totality of the refugee crisis, which includes the Palestinians and the long history that the Jewish people have had as refugees through a number of decades and eras that we know historically.

I am glad that you raised the question of the Iraq refugee or the Iraqi refugee because I think a number comes to mind and certainly this committee has looked at the question of only 68 that the United States has taken into the United States. As a member of the Subcommittee on Immigration and refugee questions in the Judiciary Committee, we have an annual meeting with the Secretary of State to talk about the caps on refugees across the world that the United States would welcome in, and our numbers were not numbers that I would be as proud of as I would like them to be, whether it was Darfur, whether it was Palestinians, whether it was others who were fleeing, we certainly could do better.

So I do want to ask the question to Dr. Telhami, on this question of working with the Palestinians, there is a concern that Palestinians have been in refugee camps on their own land or the land that is now Palestine. And I have always asked the question about the rehabilitation of those camps. In fact, moving out of those camps. And I think a partner in that should be the United Nations taking a more active role in resettling Palestinian refugees, but also taking a more active role in reconstructing the place where they are, if you will, to a place where they can live in dignity.

Why are we still living in refugee camps? I know that there is an ongoing debate, crisis, lack of a settlement in the Middle East, but that is the question that disturbs us. Why don't you focus first on whether the U.N. ACR could have a more active role in creating a better quality of life, and if you will, busting the cycle of the refugee status of the Palestinian?

Mr. TELHAMI. Well, I know this institution, Congress in general, has been critical of the role of the U.N., and on occasions, it was very legitimate over the years in terms of how ineffective they have been in handling various issues. But overall, I think people underestimate how much work they do and I think this UNWRA particularly, forget about just the relationship over the years, just if you look back at the period just recently when there is a humanitarian crisis in Gaza particularly. There is a boycott of the Palestinian Government because of Hamas. And a lot of the international donors and the services have to go to nongovernmental institutions to provide for a population that more than half of the people are under the poverty line and jobs are scarce and hopelessness is pervasive.

Really these institutions like UNWRA have been like the lifeline, and now even the United States has found it is much easier to work with these institutions because they are independent international organizations; NGOs, they are not NGOs as such because they are international organizations, but we want something that is independent from the local governments to do the work.

So they have been doing a lot of work and there are budgets allocated but remember, if you are talking about servicing a population and the need to sustain an economy, you can't just put money into investing into new housing. We have seen that, for example, right after Oslo, there was money coming in and some people invested in building infrastructure and in some instances, even in Bethlehem, building new hotels for the year 2000. And then when you had hostilities renewed, you had destruction, and investors don't want to put their money to build infrastructure, hotels, to build schools when there is no certain about the stability of the political situation.

So even though economic development has remained dependent on the politics of it, the Palestinian Authority most certainly has not been effective, and that is why the Palestinian public has voted out, in part, because of ineffective—

Ms. JACKSON LEE. It is a chicken-and-egg circumstance. I won't go because of the volatility of the area. The volatility of the area continues because I won't go. I don't think you have answered my question as to whether or not the U.N. can be more effective on the people issue. They may not be effective in trying to resolve the political conflict, but the quality of life issue and the status of refugees as it relates to the health care, housing, schooling for the children, and the whole concept of living in the refugee camps, can't the United Nations be a more effective vehicle and voice for the—at least the reordering of the lifestyles of those people living in those camps.

Mr. TELHAMI. My answer is that if they are given more resources, they can do more, no question. They can do more. But in the end, they cannot transform the lives of people on their own.

Ms. JACKSON LEE. What would you say is the transformation that you would be advocating for?

Mr. TELHAMI. You have to have a sustainable economic system because in the end you can't hand out aid indefinitely. People cannot be dependent on an international organization indefinitely. You don't want to create a structure of dependence.

What you need to do for viability of growth and future stability is to create an internal economic system that is self-sustaining, and you have to have employment, you have to have industry, you have to have good government, you have to have investors being confident.

Ms. JACKSON LEE. So are you suggesting that that only comes when a final resolution of the crisis is achieved?

Mr. TELHAMI. I think that a lot could be done even before that, but in the end I think a full transformation of the economy of those territories remains dependent on the absence of a political settlement.

Ms. JACKSON LEE. Dr. Sachar, let me, if I might, I think you mentioned or I understand that again going to the United Nations has not been as vigorous, or maybe you want to correct me, on recognizing the plight of Jewish refugees, such as a resolution. What more can the United Nations do in that instance, chronically the historical challenges that we have seen and the present status maybe even of those Jews that are in Iran. How can the U.N. be more effective in this instance?

Mr. SACHAR. Well, the U.N. is incorporated in the "Quartet" as a component member, together with the European Community, the United States and the Soviet Union, but I am skeptical, as Dr. Telhami is, of their ability to resolve this issue on their own.

I think the Quartet as a collectivity is a much more respected and a much more influential instrument to do that. I want to advert for a moment, if I may.

Ms. JACKSON LEE. You may, and give me the single most important action item that the Quartet should take. You can respond to the point you wanted to respond to.

Mr. SACHAR. I think it is, and I think most Israelis would not agree with me, but I don't think the solution to these problems are solvable between the entities themselves, the Israelis or the Palestinians. That defies historical precedent.

If you go back to the diplomatic history of Europe all the way into the 18th century, the 19th century and the 20th century you will see a succession of festering suspicions between little countries that are exacerbated in their hostility because of their very smallness and their very susceptibility to elimination, even obliteration.

And that is why the precedent that was established far back in European history of the big powers taking the responsibility and imposing the peace that they think or they thought was the product of their best collective wisdom, and by and large, the little countries had to accept that.

You can go back to the Congress of Vienna, you can go back to the Congress of Frankfurt, the Congress of Berlin, the Paris Peace Conference, no one in these international conclaves left it up to insecure, volatile, endlessly suspicious little countries to resolve their issues among each other. That had to be imposed on them.

I think that the Quartet went a long way in that roadmap, that celebrated roadmap of resolving the issues. The United Nations in 1948 and 1956, 1973 tried to do it, but ultimately, the big powers have to do it themselves. And you may say and you may inquire do they have a celestial responsibility for this. Do they have a celestial right to impose their template upon little countries?

Well, the little countries in their hostilities create big problems. They created the First World War with the assassination of a little country called Bosnia. And they almost broke the back of the international economy with the Sinai-Suez War in 1956, and again, in the Yom Kippur War of 1973.

You can't let these little countries ignite a process, a metastasis of a succession of crises that affect the world and not just the players themselves in the Middle East. And that is why I do not see any possibility of this question, the Israelis and the Palestinians, being resolved among themselves. It has to be imposed by the big powers and enforced.

Ms. JACKSON LEE. I assume then that the refugee question would obviously be woven into that response and I think that is a large order for us to digest and I think it has merit for our consideration. I appreciate the thoughtfulness in which both of you have answered the question.

I just conclude, Mr. Chairman, my simply saying, let me at least move the number of 68 up as relates to Iraqis, but let me note there are about 2 million Iraqi refugees, and I understand as you have made comment, Syria and Jordan has taken a large number of them. The United States has moved from 68 to 700. I want that to be reflected in the record.

I also want to note that the United States, in February, has outlined a plan to take 7,000 refugees, which it looks as if we have taken $\frac{1}{2}$ of 1 percent of those. I would like us to do better.

The question of refugees is important. I don't know if I am convinced totally that we must reconstruct the economic structure. It seems like we keep chasing our tail. We have got to make some statement about the plight of refugees and begin to rebuild, and I think do what you have said, which is to look at the economic reconstruct, which is a tough challenge for that region, but very important and the refugee question must be addressed. And I leave simply by saying we must stay engaged. I thank the chairman and I yield back.

Mr. ACKERMAN. Mr. Klein.

Mr. KLEIN. Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Thank you for being with us today. A question I have relates to the responsibility of the U.N. organization, which takes the lead in dealing with the refugees, the Palestinian refugees, and different than the U.N. High Commission for Refugees, its role is providing them with services. But it seems to us in the information that we have been supplied, and I would like your comment on this, that a lot of problems relate to the fact that there doesn't seem to be any way of dealing with the fact that the refugees and the things that go on in the camps, and many times really promote or allow for large developing of terrorist thinking, of participation in some of the movement toward the organizations that create some of the terrorist activities or the organizations of Hamas or Hezbollah, and what is it the United States should be doing or what should the United Nations be doing to stop this.

Mr. TELHAMI. First of all, let's separate Hamas and Hezbollah, because Hezbollah, of course, do not live in refugees camps, they are Lebanese citizens settled in Lebanon. Hamas certainly is a Pal-

estinian organization and it does, draw on some people from refugee camps in places like Gaza and the West Bank.

I don't want to defend UNWRA, because I think they defend themselves pretty well, and they have testified here not long ago I believe. Their primary service is really humanitarian. And in this environment where there has been a shortage of services available to refugees, particularly in Gaza, they have played an indispensable role. If you talk to the Embassy people in Tel Aviv or consulate people about who is doing the kind of work that we need to see done now that the Palestinian Authority cannot do particularly with the international sanctions, increasingly the finger is pointing to them. They are looking much better than they did 5 years ago by virtue of filling a gap.

Now the argument about whether they are linked to the environment that feeds into violence or not, I personally doubt that their role is central in this.

Mr. KLEIN. Mr. Chairman, if I can. I am not suggesting a link to it; I am saying there is a vacuum. That is the problem. There is a vacuum of dealing with this problem. I am not suggesting the United Nations organization is tied to this. It is just what can we do to stop this or deal with it in a more effective way.

Mr. TELHAMI. I don't think that UNWRA is going to be able to deal with it, personally. They don't have political authority in the place. Their own staff needs to be defended and protected. They cannot enforce things. They don't rule. They are not a government.

And let's face it, even when the Palestinian Authority was trying to minimize violence that the early days of Oslo when things were working and Rabin and Arafat were cooperating, they had even a tough time doing it even with guns. The Israeli Government, which clearly controlled the West Bank and Gaza for almost 40 years with military presence in the camps and logistical support at various stages, had not been able to do it.

I think this is a political problem. I think, in the end, it has to stop. You have to have a strong central authority. But it is hard to envision how that is going to completely happen without a political stable agreement with a central authority.

Let me just say one thing. One of the notions that we had in the past few years and I think it is a notion that we should think about is that terrorism proliferates where you had terroristic governments. Let's go against bad regimes and minimize terrorism. In fact, what we found is terrorism proliferates where this is weak central authority, anarchy. Anarchy provides the environment for nonstate groups and violent nonstate groups to work. We see that in Lebanon, we saw it in the Palestinian areas when the Authority was weak and they had more violence. We see it in Iraq. In Iraq, we removed a bad guy from the top, the anarchy we have has resulted in far more.

So what I am saying is in the end, the solution is really far more related to putting in place institutions that work.

Mr. KLEIN. Is there anything that can or should be done for the moment or are we just waiting until this comprehensive situation gets itself worked out? Is there any United Nations role, is there anything that can be done or do we just continue to let things happen?

Mr. TELHAMI. Beyond the humanitarian, at the moment I believe the issue is really a function of the negotiations.

Mr. KLEIN. Dr. Sachar, any thought on that?

Mr. SACHAR. I agree with negotiations, but with whom? I don't think that negotiations between the Israelis and the Palestinians are going to be productive, and I indicated my reasons for that. But over and above that, I think the dignity of a state, even a nonviable state, even a poor state is certainly preferable to an indefinite vegetation of refugees.

I remember a conversation I had in Cairo many years ago in the aftermath of the Camp David, the original Camp David conference and the foreign minister used the analogy, he said you have coming from Syria as day laborers in much more prosperous Lebanon tens and tens of thousands of people every day. They are very poor. And you wonder why they stay poor and why they, by and large, stay peaceful and why they stay law abiding.

And he said, the reason is that they know that at the end of the day they can get into their taxis and go back across the frontier into Syria and they have the dignity there of being citizens of a country with a flag.

And I think that is imminently within the realm of possibility if it is guaranteed, imposed and enforced by the big powers and not by negotiations between too many states which are endlessly in suspicion of their neighbors.

Mr. ACKERMAN. Thank you very much. I couldn't agree more with that last statement, Dr. Sachar. People should have the dignity of knowing that they have their own country, with their own flag, and I think that is part of the general debate overriding this subject of refugees and I think that it is pretty well established that most people on all sides of the issue want to see the establishment of a state with a flag and all of the other things that might go with it for the Palestinian people to return to at the end of the day.

I don't know if we are near to the end of the day right now but the argument is whether or not those people return to their own state with their own flag or return to a state that has a different flag and claim that that is their state as well. That seems to be what is happening.

Dr. Telhami points out the issue of justice, and I wanted to spend a moment talking about that. But these people who came from Syria and they were poor and they were peaceful and they were law abiding, I think they didn't necessarily have the influences upon them as exist today upon the Palestinian people who are poor, who are kept poor, who are denied in the host countries that they are in the right to education, the right to health care.

I know that if you are a refugee in this country or refugee in Israel or refugee in other countries throughout the world, with the exception of the Middle East, that people insist that your kids go to school. Even in our country, illegal immigrants, not just refugees, their children have to go to school. Our hospitals have to accept them, we have to provide services. The same services we provide to anybody else.

In the Arab world, it appears that the Palestinian people, unlike any others, are being held captive not by Israel, but by the host

states and the entire Arab world that have apparently, maybe conspired is too strong a word, but have simultaneously concluded to keep the pot boiling and to stir the cauldron as it heats up, so that these people remain poor, that their health care needs and educational needs are not met, and that somebody is trying, although the prime reason for the Hamas as stated by Dr. Telhami is to provide services, it seems to me that maybe the sub prime reason is to stir that pot and to try to see if they can foment some trouble.

It is just beyond me to understand why countries would hold people captive for multiple generations. These are the children of the children of refugees who are not permitted to be full participants in those societies, and who had a dream because that dream is being fed that they have a so-called right to return to a country that is not theirs, that Palestine will be theirs, but not two states that are going to be theirs.

I think that, Dr. Telhami, you said that nobody likes to be told that they have been tricked and nobody likes to be told that they were fooled. It is not the Israelis that are tricking or fooling these Palestinians; they are telling them they don't have a right to come and take over their country, they have a right to their own country. And it is basically the Arab world in the Middle East, some of which are the host countries, that are tricking and fooling these people.

Whose obligations it to tell these people who, for three generations, have been living in these wretched camps, whose responsibility is it to tell them that there is no tooth fairy.

Mr. TELHAMI. You know, I, like you, feel strongly about the notion of justice, and I respect different people putting forth their own perspective on justice. I just want to put a little bit of parallelism here. I think that when you look at the Jewish dilemma, the Jewish dilemma, particularly in Israel when Arabs refuse to accept the notion the Jews have a nationality or a right, that Arabs look at it as an ethnic or religious group, and therefore, why don't you settle back in Europe, and Jews get very offended by this because they have a sense of who they are, a sense of history, a sense of nationality, a sense of self that is an important part of their identity, an important part of how they define themselves, an important part of how they want to live in the world.

Refugees who left Europe may have decided to settle in Europe, somewhere else in Europe or the United States, but they have the option and they wanted to retain the option of settling in Israel if they so strongly felt. And I think that insistence, I think Arabs are going to have to come to grips with that, that this is part of the Jewish identity, that this is part of who Jews are, that this is part of—that is not just ethnicity, not just a refugee issue, there is a national issue. This is a sense of self that one has to reconcile one's self to and one has to come to terms with if one is going to live together for a long period of time.

And I think that Israelis are going to have to come to grips with the fact that Palestinians have defined themselves in a particular way. Yes, people talk about the Arab world and the sense of connection, but the notion here is that they are a differentiated people that decided in part because of the ineffectiveness and the par-

ticular policies and behavior of Arab countries vis-a-vis the Palestinians, they have defined themselves in a particular way.

Mr. ACKERMAN. Why is it Jews have to be realistic? Israelis have to be realistic if Palestinians don't have to be?

Mr. TELHAMI. I think they both have to be.

Mr. ACKERMAN. Do Palestinians have to be realistic to accept the fact that they can be resettled in Palestine from these camps?

Mr. TELHAMI. I think so. I think in practical terms, yes. I think if Palestinians do not become realistic enough to understand that a two-state solution means Israel with a Jewish majority, then they have got a problem, yes. That is what I am saying.

Mr. ACKERMAN. How do we get that across to them when all of these individual little states, as Dr. Sachar would call them, are trying to convince them that they have a right to return to Israel?

Mr. TELHAMI. What I am saying is that you have got to separate the issue of right and self—sense of self from the practical implementation of an agreement. And they are practical enough to know how it is going to be implemented but they insist on defining a sense of self, their sense of dignity and sense of history, just as Jews want to claim a right to return to a land that they see as a land of their ancestors. No one can take that away from them. Even if they want to compromise on that land, practically, because it is a national solution to the problem.

So what I am suggesting to you is that this is the sort of thing that, yes, both sides are going to have to come to grips with. Some of it cannot happen before an agreement. That is why I suggest that historical kind of accounting of this has to come through a Truth in Reconciliation Commission that usually happens after an agreement because people are going to be a little bit more confident about opening up.

Mr. ACKERMAN. Do you see the Palestinians accepting the notion that they are not going to return to Israel?

Mr. TELHAMI. I believe that—in my own mind, I believe that most Palestinians know this. Now what we have seen in the public opinion polls that were done among refugees is that given choices, most would not choose to return to Israel.

So in that sense, there is even evidence to suggest that even if they have choices, including the choice of returning, most probably would not choose to return. I know the Israelis wouldn't want to count on that, so they would want to have it as an agreement in terms of the limits, but I think that is what the polls show.

Mr. ACKERMAN. You have stated a couple of times about a compensation package, that Palestinians are entitled to a compensation package. I assume you mean in lieu of returning?

Mr. TELHAMI. I think in lieu of returning and property compensation. So it is going to be obviously—I have not seen any very good numbers. There have been ideas suggesting beginning with Bill Clinton's informal offer during the Camp David negotiations to people who have done numbers going up to a \$100 billion.

So clearly, it is going to be a costly thing if we look at the precedent also of just paying settlers leaving from Gaza. It is not going to be that expensive, because you are talking about, in terms of equivalent of arrangement, it is probably going to be a little bit different but I think no one really has a good grip on what kind of

numbers we are talking about, and I think that is why you need an international agency of some sort that begins to do it because in the end, that is going to have to be a central component of a settlement of the refugee issue.

Mr. SACHAR. I agree with every word that Professor Telhami says.

Mr. TELHAMI. Thank you.

Mr. ACKERMAN. Dr. Sachar, let me ask you a question, by your count, there were 856,000 Jews in the Arab world that were displaced?

Mr. SACHAR. In the Middle East and North Africa.

Mr. ACKERMAN. And the best numbers we have from the Arab world, which varies, approximately 720,000 Arabs that were displaced during the Israeli-Palestinian deal. What would be the relative worth of the assets of that Jewish community compared to the relative assets that were left behind of the Palestinian community? Would you say it was at least tenfold?

Mr. SACHAR. Yes, but not equitably distributed. For example, in Iraq and Egypt—

Mr. ACKERMAN. Talking about total number.

Mr. SACHAR [continuing]. Even in those two countries the Jews were the patricians of those countries. They were very influential in business, and their holdings often were in the millions of dollars.

Mr. ACKERMAN. Some Palestinians were wealthy and some were poor, but on the aggregate, approximately 10 times?

Mr. SACHAR. I can't quantify that. It was more. It was more, yes. In terms of bald figures, it was more.

Mr. ACKERMAN. If we assume it was only 10 times, then if the Palestinians are entitled to a package that Dr. Telhami has suggested that Bill Clinton or somebody during that negotiation suggested of \$100 million, one would think that the Jewish compensation of the assets that they left behind in the Arab world and North Africa, and I am not counting stuff that was left in Spain during 1429 in the Spanish Inquisition, but just from the Arab world, one would think the value of that package would be 10 times what the other package is.

And if you are talking about justice, is not everybody entitled to the same justice? Forget about the reality that Israeli is willing to accept.

Mr. SACHAR. You want an adding machine now?

Mr. ACKERMAN. No, I am just making the point that if that is going to be part of the negotiation and the Arab world is going to insist upon that, that the Palestinians that they have deprived of equality and participated in robbing of a sense of dignity that are in some of the camps, that that be made part of the equation. Is that fair from a negotiating point of view?

Mr. SACHAR. No, I don't think it is fair because actually the cost of absorbing the Jewish refugees from the Middle East and Europe were huge.

Mr. ACKERMAN. Absorbed by whom?

Mr. SACHAR. For the Israelis.

Mr. ACKERMAN. Absorbed by the Israelis.

Mr. SACHAR. But they had help, significant help.

Mr. ACKERMAN. From the community around the world.

Mr. SACHAR. German restitutions, contributions by the United States.

Mr. ACKERMAN. And the United States makes \$100 million a year compensation or support for the Palestinian community and the camps, more than any other country.

Mr. SACHAR. But what does diplomatic support mean, what does de facto access to the Common Market mean? Israel has not been neglected by the free world, and I think that when you equate the suffering of people, you can't just measure—

Mr. ACKERMAN. I am not doing that. I would never equate the suffering of people. Suffering is suffering, and all human beings are entitled and we are responsible to help assure that they have the same sense of dignity as anybody else.

What I am equating is dollars to dollar, because if we are talking about a compensation package, and certain refugees lost a dollar and certain refugees lost \$5, then if everybody is entitled to compensation based on what they lost or had to leave behind, then we have to treat everybody with the same sense of justice. And if Jews are being held to a different standard because they are Jews and they should know better and they should have a sense of reality, and because the Palestinians don't have a sense of reality, that they are not going to Israel, then Israel should have a reality to accept that is a new reality. I don't understand that part of the logic. But the math I do understand, and I don't know if it is ten-fold, you are right, but it is certainly a multiple.

And the point I am trying to make has nothing to do with integrity, with dignity, but truly with an application of justice.

Mr. TELHAMI. But the numbers, obviously, we are throwing these numbers out of nowhere. We don't know whether—

Mr. ACKERMAN. And we are not negotiating.

Mr. TELHAMI. So let us keep that in perspective. This needs a lot of analysis.

Mr. ACKERMAN. Even if it is one-to-one.

The point I was trying to make, if there is a negotiation that refugees are entitled to compensation, whether fairly or not—I don't know that the Indians got the right price for Manhattan Island, but that was what they got—but if someone is entitled to compensation for an injustice, then everyone is entitled to.

And let me say it has been a fascinating hearing this morning. I want to thank both of you for your tremendous scholarship and intellectual contributions to this issue, and you have tremendously benefited the Congress and the subcommittee, in particular. And your complete testimony, in addition to what was presented, will be made a part of the official record.

We stand adjourned.

[Whereupon, at 12:10 p.m., the subcommittee was adjourned.]

